

THE INDEPENDENT

Wednesday 20 May 1998 45p (R50p) No 3,615 *

Cook misled MPs on arms to Africa

By Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

ROBIN Cook misled the House of Commons last week about the Sandline affair, it was revealed last night, when it emerged that M16 alerted officials to the sanctions-busting months ago.

In a planted Parliamentary answer last night Mr Cook made the damaging admission that five intelligence reports seen by officials at the Foreign Office linked Sandline with the supply of arms or military equipment to Sierra Leone.

Last night both main opposition parties demanded that the Foreign Secretary should come to the House of Commons in person to explain himself.

Only last Tuesday, Mr Cook had assured MPs: "At no stage over the past months was any intelligence passed to ministers or officials that suggested a breach of the arms embargo."

The disclosure shows just how much information was withheld from ministers by senior officials over the affair and also underlines just how deeply involved and well-briefed M16 was about it. But it will also be

politically embarrassing for Mr Cook.

The Independent understands that the five reports were sent to the Foreign Office after the beginning of February. It is likely they were seen by officials on the equatorial-Africa desk.

The confirmation that M16 knew about Sandline's activities does raise questions about how the service handled the information and why it was apparently missing from the intelligence digests it prepares for ministers.

Last Thursday the Permanent Secretary of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Sir

Inside
'What we did in
Sierra Leone was
designed for the
good of the country'
Tim Spicer,
page 2

John Kerr, told MPs that he knew six weeks ago of allegations that his staff colluded in the shipment of arms to the exiled President Kabbah. He did not tell the Foreign Secretary, he added, because it was a

"housekeeping matter" and Mr Cook was busy. Mr Cook only found out at the end of April when he received a letter from Sandline's solicitors.

Officials said last night that the Foreign Secretary had taken the first possible opportunity to correct the misleading impression that he had inadvertently given.

In his reply to Charles Clarke, Labour MP for Norwich South, he said Sir Thomas Legg's independent inquiry into the affair would have access to intelligence reports as well as to all other official documents re-

ferred to Sandline. The new discovered reports were written and delivered between 8 October last year, when the House passed a resolution banning arms to Sierra Leone, and 9 March this year, when a Customs & Excise investigation began.

"We are aware of five intelligence reports... which refer to Sandline, or companies associated with Sandline, and to the supply of arms or military equipment. They were seen by officials but not by ministers," Mr Cook's reply said.

Michael Howard, Shadow

Foreign Secretary, said the answer clearly showed that Mr Cook had misled MPs. "He should therefore come to the House and apologise at the earliest opportunity," he said.

Menzies Campbell, the Liberal Democrat foreign affairs spokesman, said the mistake should be rectified immediately.

"This written answer only serves to add to the confusion and speculation of the last two weeks. Mr Cook will almost certainly have to come to the House of Commons to explain this apparent discrepancy," he said.

It seems Mr Cook only

found out about the intelligence reports after he answered a Conservative-sponsored debate on the issue on Monday. Mr Clarke's question was put down on Monday evening for answer yesterday.

The official code of conduct for ministers says it is of "paramount importance" that they give accurate and truthful information to Parliament and that they correct any error at the earliest opportunity.

However, there is no reason to suspect that Mr Cook knowingly misled the House - a clear resigning matter.

Saudi nurses to be freed with pardon

By Diana Blamires

THE two British nurses jailed in Saudi Arabia after the murder of a colleague are to be freed with a pardon by King Fahd.

The Saudi ambassador to Britain, Dr Ghazi Algeisbi, said Lucille McLauchlan and Deborah Parry, jailed after the murder of Yvonne Gifford in 1996, should be home in two days.

Ms Parry was reported as having been sentenced to death, although that was never confirmed by the Foreign Office. Ms McLauchlan was sentenced to receive 500 lashes and eight years in prison. In her case the lashes were not administered.

In a statement last night the ambassador said: "In response to a petition from the families of the two British nurses convicted of murder in Saudi Arabia, the custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Fahd bin Abdul Aziz, issued an order commuting the sentence of the two nurses to the period they have already spent in jail and ordering their release."

"According to the judicial laws of Saudi Arabia when the next of kin in a murder case waives the right to retribution, the court can impose a discretionary jail sentence which the king can commute. This is what happened in this case. I expect

the two nurses to be back in the UK in the next couple of days."

Rodger Pannone, a solicitor for Deborah Parry, said: "We are absolutely delighted."

A source close to the Parry family said: "Tony Blair's endorsement of the family's plea for clemency in Saudi Arabia made a big difference."

Peter Watson, solicitor for the McLauchlan family, added: "The entire team would like to thank the British media for the tremendous support they have given and the sensitive treatment of this case."

Lawyer Stephen Jakobi, of Fair Trials Abroad, which lobbied for the nurses to be allowed legal representation, said: "The two governments and those responsible for reaching this solution must be congratulated. It is a diplomatic coup."

Ms McLauchlan, 32, from Dundee, and Ms Parry, 39, from Alton, Hampshire, were charged with Australian Miss Gifford's murder on 24 December 1996. The Saudis said they confessed to the killing, but the pair withdrew the confessions, claiming they were made under duress.

The dead woman's brother, Frank Gifford, at first insisted on exercising his right under Saudi law to enforce the death penalty, but later agreed to waive it.



Parry (left) and McLauchlan: 'Home in two days'



The Rev Ian Paisley, Democratic Unionist leader, exhorts the crowd at a fair in Ballyclare to vote 'No' in Friday's referendum. Doubters jeopardise 'Yes' vote, page 6. Photograph: Reuters

UK goes back to nuclear age

By Michael Harrison
and Colin Brown

THE Government is being urged to restart Britain's nuclear power programme three years after plans to build any further stations were abandoned on cost grounds.

British Energy, the privatised nuclear generator, has told ministers that they may have no option if Britain is to meet its target for cutting greenhouse gases.

The move, which has astonished Whitehall officials, comes as ministers prepare to meet electricity generators to thrash out a deal to save the coal industry from extinction at the hands of nuclear and gas-fired power stations.

Building a new generation of nuclear stations would almost certainly mean higher electric-

ity prices as it is unlikely that the Government would agree to any public subsidy.

Several ministers are understood to have given British Energy a sympathetic hearing. However, a core group of Cabinet ministers, led by the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott and the President of the Board of Trade, Margaret Beckett, are likely to balk at anything which could seal the fate of Britain's remaining 23 deep coalmines.

The safety of nuclear energy is another concern. Matthew Taylor, Liberal Democrat environment spokesman, said: "The safety issues have still not been resolved, and every study has concluded it is not financially viable, once you take into account the costs of decommissioning."

British Energy has eight nuclear stations, the first of which, Hinkley Point B and Hunterston B, will start being decommissioned in 2011. But the company has told ministers that decisions on the role to be played by nuclear power in Britain's energy policy will need to be taken long before then as it could take 10 years to construct more nuclear capacity.

Next month the Government will announce the results of a six-month review into how future electricity demand will be met. The energy review was launched just before Christmas as a way of throwing a lifeline to the coal industry, which is facing the threat of seven to eight pit closures and the loss of 6,000 jobs. But the higher problem ministers are grappling with is how to prevent Britain from becoming dependent on

gas to fulfil as much as 90 per cent of its energy needs by 2020.

John Battle, the Energy Minister, told a coal industry conference yesterday that it was right to question whether Britain could be comfortable with a "mono-fuel source future" in which it could be dependent for some of its gas supplies on volatile countries such as Russia and Algeria.

British Energy's chief executive Peter Hollins said yesterday that nuclear power had a vital role to play in the future. "The only reason that the UK has met its Kyoto targets is because of the contribution of nuclear power. If Britain is to take its greenhouse gas targets seriously, then nuclear power has got to have a significant role in future energy generation."

Downsley shake-up, page 8
Business Outlook, page 23

Gazza drinks in the last-chance saloon

By Clive White

NOT FOR the first time, though just possibly for the last, Paul Gascoigne's off-field activities consumed about 90 per cent of England's press conference yesterday.

The World Cup finals are just around the corner and

Saudi Arabia will play the role of warm-up opponents at Wembley on Saturday.

But at a time when England's finest should be aiming for a peak of mental and physical fitness, Gazza has been spotted out on the town in the past week enjoying a bevy or two with his celebrity friends Rod Stewart and Chris Evans, and, apparently, looking rather the worse for wear because of it.

Coming on top of recent revelations about the player's smoking habits, these latest incidents were almost too much to bear for the England coach,

Glenn Hoddle, and he duly issued Gascoigne with what smacked of a final warning.

"He's disappointed me," said Hoddle. "I've told him that and he's apologised. He knows what the next stage is."

The deadline for Gascoigne may well be 2 June, when Hoddle must tell eight players among his squad of 30 that they are not required for the finals in France.

Hoddle conceded that Gascoigne was only 60 per cent fit and that the footballer's lifestyle of smoking, drinking and late-night kebabs, as much as his recent injuries, was the cause.

He refused to accept that Gascoigne, due to his fame and reputation, was under any more pressure than other players who were in the spotlight and he singled out David Beckham, who is engaged to Victoria Adams, one of the Spice Girls, as an example.

Apologetic as he may have been to his manager, Gascoigne appeared unrepentant. "I never let anybody down when I put on an England shirt," he said. "What I do outside of the game, that's my problem."

New yobocracy, page 3
Hoddle's riot act, page 32

Today's news

Indonesia braced for more

INDONESIA faces another round of explosive demonstrations today after a nationwide address in which President Suharto defied demands for his immediate resignation. Page 11

Threatened heritage

SOME of Britain's finest historic buildings, including parts of Castle Howard, setting for the television adaptation of *Brideshead Revisited*, could be lost unless cash is found for restoration. A report says 1,500 buildings are threatened. Page 4

Padre 'groped Army wife'

AN ARMY chaplain grabbed a soldier's wife's breast before asking her to make love to him, a court martial was told. Captain Richard Landall also made lewd remarks to another soldier's wife and wolf-whistled at her. Page 9

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Gazza's friends: the new yobbocracy

Britannia never looked less cool. Its cultural heroes are now yobboocrats – a network of drinkers, not thinkers. By David Thomas

YOU can judge a man by the company he keeps. So why, with 21 days to go before the World Cup opens in France, is Paul Gascoigne, England's football totem, out carousing again with the likes of Chris Evans and Danny Baker?

It's a question that is splitting the nation. Some have no problem with Gazza's kebab-and-fags-and-lager preparation for the biggest sporting occasion of the year. Others side with the approach favoured by the Arsenal manager, Arsène Wenger: orange juice, salad and early to bed. Sadly, Gazza is also a totem of the Yobbocracy, a group of A-list celebrity New Lads and Lassies who like to do their roistering in the public eye.

Gazza is the Tim Nice-But-Dim of this clique. "What's wrong with having a kebab?" he said yesterday. "We're talking about one night. I'm sure a lot of the other guys were having a drink as well."

Of course, such unorthodox preparation is nothing new for Gazza, who warmed up for Euro96 with a drinking marathon in Hong Kong (his chosen poison: the flaming Lamborghini). Then, to prove his critics wrong, he scored that extraordinary goal against Scotland.

What is new, however, is the way a group of high-profile, heavy drinking stars from different fields have come together to form the Yobbocracy. What Gazza is to football, the Gallagher brothers are to rock. Damien Hirst is to art, James Brown, the former editor of *Loaded*, is to magazine publishing and Chris Evans and Zoe Ball are to breakfast radio shows.

Not only are they naughty, they possess wealth that few genuine aristocrats could match.

Evans has a 55 per cent stake in the Ginger Media Group, owners of Virgin radio and Ginger Productions, valued at more than £100 million. Noel Gallagher's song-writing royalties from Oasis now run to tens of millions. And while poor George Best may have had trouble paying the £300,000 mortgage on his London flat, Gazza could have bought it outright from petty cash.

Yet for all their affluence, the Yobbocracy have inherited the par-

simonious instincts of their upper-class predecessors. Nothing attracts a Yobboocrat more than the prospect of a free drink, hence their appearances at launches, award ceremonies and freebies of all kinds.

Damien Hirst likes to take his pals to the Pharmacy restaurant in Notting Hill: he owns it and the drinks are on the house. Little wonder he is so popular with this crowd.

His other eatery, Quo Vadis, in Soho, is a yob-spotter's paradise, even if the yobs – having quaffed copious iced margaritas – sometimes ignore its expensive menu in favour of the nearest kebab stand.


Just down the street from Quo Vadis is the Groucho Club, once Yob Central and still a popular spot for those who haven't, like Liam Gallagher, been banned for life. The centre of star gravity has, however, shifted from the Groucho to the Soho House, a short stagger away in Greek Street.

Similarly, Yobboocrats used to gather in Oliver Peyton's Atlantic Bar and Grill, but that's now reserved for aspirant yoblets: the stars are more likely to be found in Peyton's new hang-out, Mash. Chris Evans, however, prefers the Met Bar at the Metropolitan Hotel on Park Lane.

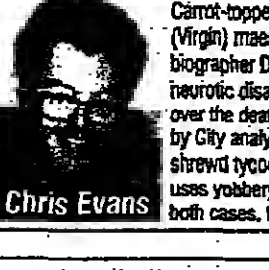
For more sensitive trend-setters the presence of boorish celebrities is a distinctly mixed blessing. According to Danielle Noy, a Channel 5 executive and party-girl deluxe, "We're all dreading the moment when they realise that the Mirabelle is the new chic place. When Gazza catches up, you know it's time to move on."

Not that the Yobbocracy are worried by the reactions of others. If pathetically middle-class types are offended, they may reply with the disdain of a true toff (although sometimes in the four-letter vernacular of the street).

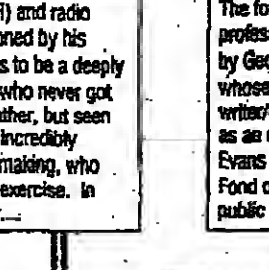
These are not, you might think, nice people. But in the same way that sad, middle-aged teachers sometimes try to solve the problems of indiscipline by ingratiating themselves with misfit pupils, so a sad, middle-aged Downing Street establishment – faced with an entire generation of



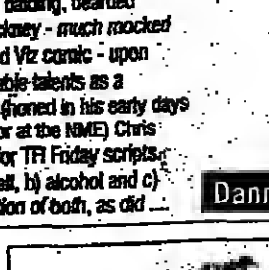
Jonathan Ross
The former wunderkind of Channel 4 and would-be entrepreneur, now to be found, physically inflated but mentally sharp, cracking spontaneous fumbles on TV's yob-pop quiz *Never Mind the Buzzcocks* (and as a Virgin DJ) while the tabloids concentrate on the marital traumas of his brother....




Chris Evans
Carrot-topped telly (TFI) and radio (Virgin) maestro, reckoned by his biographer David Jones to be a deeply neurotic disaster-area who never got over the death of his father, but seen by City analysts as an incredibly shrewd tycoon-in-the-making, who uses yobbery as a PR exercise. In both cases, takes after....



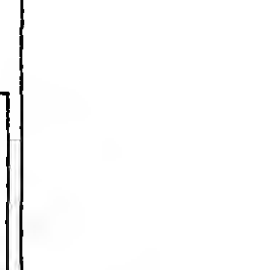
Paul Ross
Who balances a career as a TV exec, eg Planet 24, where he produced *The Word*, with repeated attempts to break into TV stardom. Has attracted more attention as an errant husband (his wife??? Is *New Best Friends* with fellow it wife and Anthea Turner conqueror Della Bovey) and public snigger of....




Paul Gascoigne
Just your regular hard-drinking, lag-smoking, wife-beating kinda guy. Dines out on a reputation as a good footballer, though far better known for displays of on-field tearfulness, wearing plastic gorilla-boobs and missing c.50% of all his sides' games through injury or suspension. Is drinking buddies with....



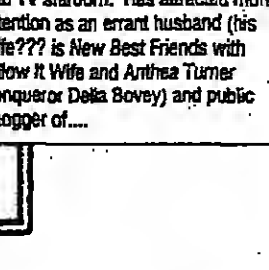
Ulrika Johnsson
The ultimate telly-titty and lad-mag goddess, ever-ready to pose in absurdly revealing costumes, while regaling interviewers with tales of drunken excess. Yet this modern *Miss Jekyll* has a Dr Hyde, the sophisticated, multi-lingual presenter who was perfectly at home hosting Eurovision. It's the good girl-bad girl dichotomy, just like....



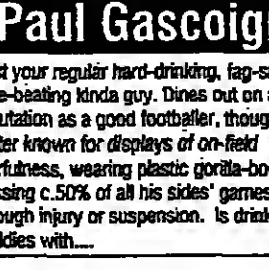
James Brown
Arguably the most influential editor of the Nineties, the Leeds-supporting creator of *Loaded*, the definitive lad-yob glossy currently celebrating its 50th edition. Hasn't kicked football, but has gone on the wagon, which may or may not explain his struggle to recreate the old magic in *GO's* refined environment, while his old title waxes out S'wM photo-sessions with....




Caroline Aherne
Whose Mrs Merton innocent-old-lady persona hides a maelstrom of intrigue and marital discord, courtesy of ex-husband Peter 'Hooky' Hook, the ex-New Order bassist: both belong to the Manchester yobbocracy, upon whose thrones reign....




The Gallaghers
Noel and Liam (and Paul - the one who hangs around with his much richer, more famous young siblings). They are the ultimate uter-yobs. They're loudmouthed, they spit on stage, they fight each other and anyone else who'll have them.... and yet they're weirdly feeble, constantly moaning, chickening out of US tours when the going gets tough....



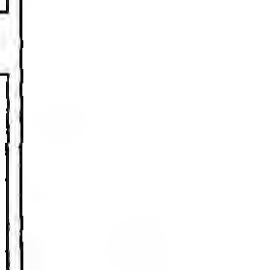
Vic Reeves
The Man Utd-supporting host of *Shooting Stars* and single biggest boost to the career of Ulrika Johnsson (qv), who has had a Paul Ross-style on/off marriage, but who can just about claim that his work is part-comedy, part conceptual art. Hpw very like....



Patsy Kensit
The former TV advert moppet, Eighth Wonder vocalist, *Lethal Weapon* 2 co-starlet and Mrs Jim Simple Minds' Kerr has become a regular source of tabloid fascination as life as Mrs Liam Gallagher appears to have left her strained, skinny and - that old stand-by - emotionally exhausted. That's what you get from hanging round with....



Zoe Ball
A cute'n'hooky kiddies' presenter, or a hard-drinking DJ (to the point of amnesia, she told *Time Out* recently) lately, whose tales of debauchery have - say sniffy columnists - coarsened Radio One and cheapened herself. Is the yob lifestyle really suitable for women? Just ask....



McQueen
Alexander McQueen Gay, working-class creator of 'bumster' trousers. As a trainee tailor wrote rude messages in the linings of Prince Charles' suits, now installed in Paris as designer for Givenchy where he appeared on the catwalk after his last couture show bleached blonde, 50lbs lighter and shod in high-heeled mules. So, another skinny bimboette, just like....

Canadian author scoops Orange Prize with a tale of male angst

By Boyd Tonkin
Literary Editor

THE judges of the Orange Prize, open only to women novelists, last night extended a friendly hand to the opposite sex by giving this year's £30,000 award to a funny and sympathetic account of an ordinary guy in the midst of a mid-life crisis.

Larry's Party by the Chicago-born but Canadian-resident novelist Carol Shields, portrays a prosperous but self-doubting garden designer whose life takes a new turning after a moment of enlightenment in the maze at Hampton Court.

Reviewing the book in *The Independent*, Penelope Lively called it "a brilliant fictional reflection on what it may be like to be a man in the late 20th century". Male critics concurred. Choosing *Larry's Party* as a Book of the Year, also in *The Independent*, television scriptwriter Andrew Davies found it "stunningly vivid" and "like the mazes its hero designs - very skilfully patterned".

Carol Shields was 7-2 second favourite to win the prize, just behind Pauline Melville's Whitbread-winning first novel *The Venetian*. She has lived for many years in Whitby, where she is chancellor of the university. Born in 1935, she did not achieve widespread success on both sides of the Atlantic until the early 1990s. After that, she rapidly rose to prominence with novels such as *Happencourse* (which tells the same story from a male and female point of view), *The Republic of Love* and *The Stone Diaries*, which won the Pulitzer Prize.

Supported by the mobile-phone group



Carol Shields, whose literary award represents a second successive Canadian triumph

An extract from *Larry's Party*:

TURNING 40 opened a seam of panic in Larry Weller, and he had to admit, sadly, that there was nothing remarkable in this. A fortenth birthday is twinned with anxiety, with mortal dread, it's to be expected, it's par for the course, at least among Larry's acquaintances or from what he glimpses on the commercials he sees on TV, which seem differently targeted for the post-forties, more sincerely sorry that "you out there" must be informed about the hazards of heart disease or haemorrhoids or depression triggers.

Forty is on the side of the wealthy and the ailing - Larry sometimes burns with the shame of having "dome wall" - and the dis-equilibrium 40 brings is all too well marked on the psychological road map: you shrug when it comes along, shrug and suffer in the shambling morning light and wait for your brain to absorb its juices.

but with its prize-money funded by an anonymous American benefactor, the Orange Prize was first awarded in 1996 after hostile press attention had deterred its original sponsor, Mitsubishi of Japan. It has courted controversy both with its gender restriction and by its apparent favouring of North American over British writers. Only one British author, Pauline Melville, appears on this year's shortlist. Shields's award represents a second successive Canadian

triumph, following last year's victory for *Fugitive Pieces* by Anne Michaels. *Larry's Party* by Carol Shields is published in paperback this week by Fourth Estate. The other shortlisted titles were Pauline Melville's *The Venetian* (Bloomsbury), Deirdre Purcell's *Love Like Hate* (Pan), Kirsten Bakis's *Lives of the Monster Dogs* (Sceptre), Ann Patchett's *The Magician's Assistant* (Fourth Estate) and Anita Shreve's *The Weight of Water* (Little, Brown).

Women die 'to save NHS £7,500 a year'

By Jeremy Lawrence
Health Editor

A CANCER DRUG that can buy women an extra year of life for £7,500 should no longer be denied to those who need it, a group of doctors and patient organisations said yesterday.

The drug, Taxol, has been shown to extend the lives of women with advanced ovarian cancer by at least 10 months but many do not get it because their local health authorities regard it as too expensive. Results from the largest clinical trial re-

leased in the US yesterday confirm that when combined with platinum, it could postpone the premature deaths of many of the 6,000 women who develop the cancer in the UK each year if it was more widely prescribed.

A statement issued by the group yesterday called for an end to "postcode rationing" and wide variations in standards of care.

Jean Mossman, chief executive of CancerBacup, the patient support service, said: "To face a diagnosis of ovarian cancer is bad enough. To face it knowing that a patient in an-

other part of the country can enjoy better treatment and potentially better survival must be heartbreaking."

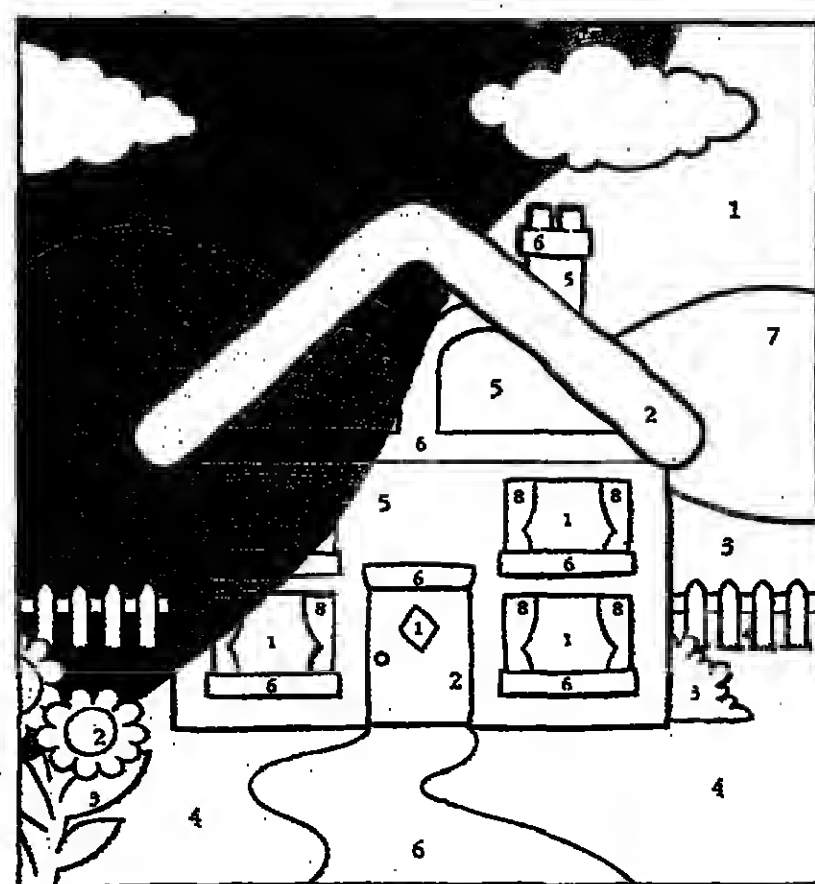
Dr Hilary Thomas, senior lecturer in clinical oncology at Hammersmith Hospital, west London, said: "We are talking about £7,500 per patient. That's the cost of a small car. The idea that £7,500 is too much for an extra year of life is ridiculous."

Ovarian cancer is the fourth commonest cause of cancer death in women, claiming 4,000 lives a year in the UK. The position of the ovaries deep in the

abdomen makes early diagnosis difficult. Most sufferers are not diagnosed until the disease is well advanced. The standard treatment is removal of the ovaries, plus chemotherapy, but when the cancer has spread only one in five patients survives five years.

Dr Patrick Therasse, director of the European Organisation for the Research and Treatment of Cancer Data Centre said: "With this new regimen taken as reference, we could extend the life expectancy of 7,000 women in Europe each year."

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New list shows historic buildings at special risk



The Wellington Arch, central London (left), the Salisbury pub, north London, and Castle Howard, Yorkshire, are listed in need of urgent repair. Photographs: David Rose, David Hunter.

By Steve Boggan

SOME of Britain's finest historic buildings, including parts of Castle Howard, the setting for the television adaptation of *Brideshead Revisited*, could be lost to the nation unless cash is found for urgent restoration.

According to an English

Heritage report published yesterday, 1,500 Grade I and II buildings may crumble beyond repair if action is not taken, with one-quarter being described as in "immediate danger".

The warning was sounded by English Heritage following the publication of the first national register of the country's most

beautiful or historically significant buildings and promises of £5m in grants to help save them.

Among the entries are Wellington Arch, at Hyde Park Corner, through which the body of Diana, Princess of Wales, was carried en route to her funeral; Saltwood Castle, in Kent, home of the maverick Tory MP

Alan Clark; the impressive conservatories of Wentworth Castle in south Yorkshire, and 7 Ditherington Flax Mill, the first iron-framed building in the world and the forerunner to the skyscraper. Castle Howard, in north Yorkshire, where the acclaimed television version of Evelyn Waugh's novel was

filmed in 1981, is in need of up to £2m of repairs to its mausoleum, gates, railings, walls, a 1778 Medici vase and pedestal, and a collapsing balustrade.

The Grade I building, designed by Vanbrugh and Hawksmoor, was repaired with a grant in the 1980s, but more work needs to be done. "The estate is owned by the Hon Simon Howard and he estimates repair work on the mausoleum will cost £1-£2m," said Peter De Lange, spokesman for English Heritage.

Unveiling the register, Sir Jocelyn Stevens, chairman of English Heritage, said: "Historic buildings are a most significant part of our cultural heritage. They are an irreplaceable element of the collective memory of local communities, contributing to the public's sense of place and identity."

"Now we will be able to target resources on those buildings in greatest need. Today we publish details for the first time, backed by a £5m package of grants. Doing nothing is no longer an option."

English Heritage intends the register to be used to help

local authorities identify vulnerable buildings and to prompt owners to maintain them with the aid of a guide.

Other buildings identified as in need of help include: Astley Castle, a moated medieval manor house in Warwickshire; Dalton Pumping Station; a high Victorian edifice near Durham; Pastoo Barn in Norfolk, one of the finest barns in the country; and Pleasley Colliery, a former coal mine in Derbyshire.

English Heritage, which said the register implied no criticism of owners, also included in the regional list Rufus Castle, in Portland, Dorset; the former Assize Court in Bodmin, Cornwall; and the disused Exe Vale Hospital at Exminster, Devon.

On 3 June, English Heritage will publish a list of monuments at risk. Sir Jocelyn said: "Together with the Buildings at Risk Register, these two documents will, for the first time, provide an overall assessment of the most important elements of our historic environment."

"How safe is our heritage? Finally we shall be able to answer and be equipped with the knowledge to make it safer."



Holiday photo clue in hunt for girl's killer

By Jason Bennetto
Crime Correspondent

POLICE hunting the man who raped and murdered 13-year-old Caroline Dickinson while she was on a school trip in France have obtained a photograph of a suspect in what could be an important breakthrough.

A Frenchman was photographed at a hostel in the Republic of Ireland in January by a Swiss couple on holiday. They became suspicious after noticing the similarity between the stranger and a photofit shown on television of a suspect seen near the dormitory in Britanny where Caroline was murdered nearly two years ago.

The French police have alerted the authorities in Ireland and circulated copies of the photograph, which features a man with dark eyebrows and long straggly hair. The man was photographed at Clifden, in the Connemara holiday region in the west of Ireland. Checks on hostels in the area are being carried out.

One of Caroline's teachers, Nick Ward, who is reported to have seen a strange man loitering near Caroline's bedroom on the night she died, 18 July 1996,

has also seen the photograph and believes there are similarities between the two images.

The photograph could be an important lead in an investigation that has been hampered by a series of police blunders, including failure to follow up potentially vital clues.

Caroline was found raped and smothered in a youth hostel dormitory in the village of Pleine Fougères, near Rennes. She was killed while four girl classmates slept in the same room.

John Dickinson, Caroline's father, said yesterday: "This could be an important development, but I'm not building my hopes up."

Captain Jean-Pierre Michel, the gendarme officer who recently took over the investigation, said: "They [the Swiss couple] were on holiday in Ireland taking pictures of crowds of people as they were sightseeing. When they were looking at their photographs they thought they had common characteristics with the image they had seen on the television."

"We are investigating this lead and trying to find out whether it is the same person."

He refused to give details of the photograph, saying it was too early in the investigation.

DAILY POEM

Last Dream

By Susan Wicks

Not this one at the café table
spidered with red, crystals in our glasses
glinting in sunlight.
My crumpled jacket.

Not this tide of wings rising
through green, flash of opened windows
over wet tarmac, the swirl
and lift of liver.

Not even the ridged truck-bed
where we lie down in dark, the pink explosion
of city stars, this cold metal
the length of our bodies.

But your hand a warm root
crusted with earth as I lift it
to my cheek and hold it.
The kiss of grit.

Susan Wicks is a poet who has also written an acclaimed memoir (*Driving my Father*) and two novels. *Little Thing*, her latest fiction, is published this week by Faber & Faber (£9.99).

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Doubters jeopardise Unionist Yes vote

By David McKitterick
Ireland Correspondent

UNIONISTS campaigning for a "Yes" vote in Friday's Ulster referendum admitted last night that they are short of securing a majority in their own community for the Good Friday agreement.

According to their estimate, the pro-agreement vote is hovering at or under the 65 per cent mark across the communities, a result which would not deliver a decisive Unionist majority for the deal.

This means that the final days of the campaign are expected to see a fevered burst of activity in an attempt to capture the large number of undecided Protestant voters. One source said: "There are an awful lot of confused, doubtful, volatile voters still out there."

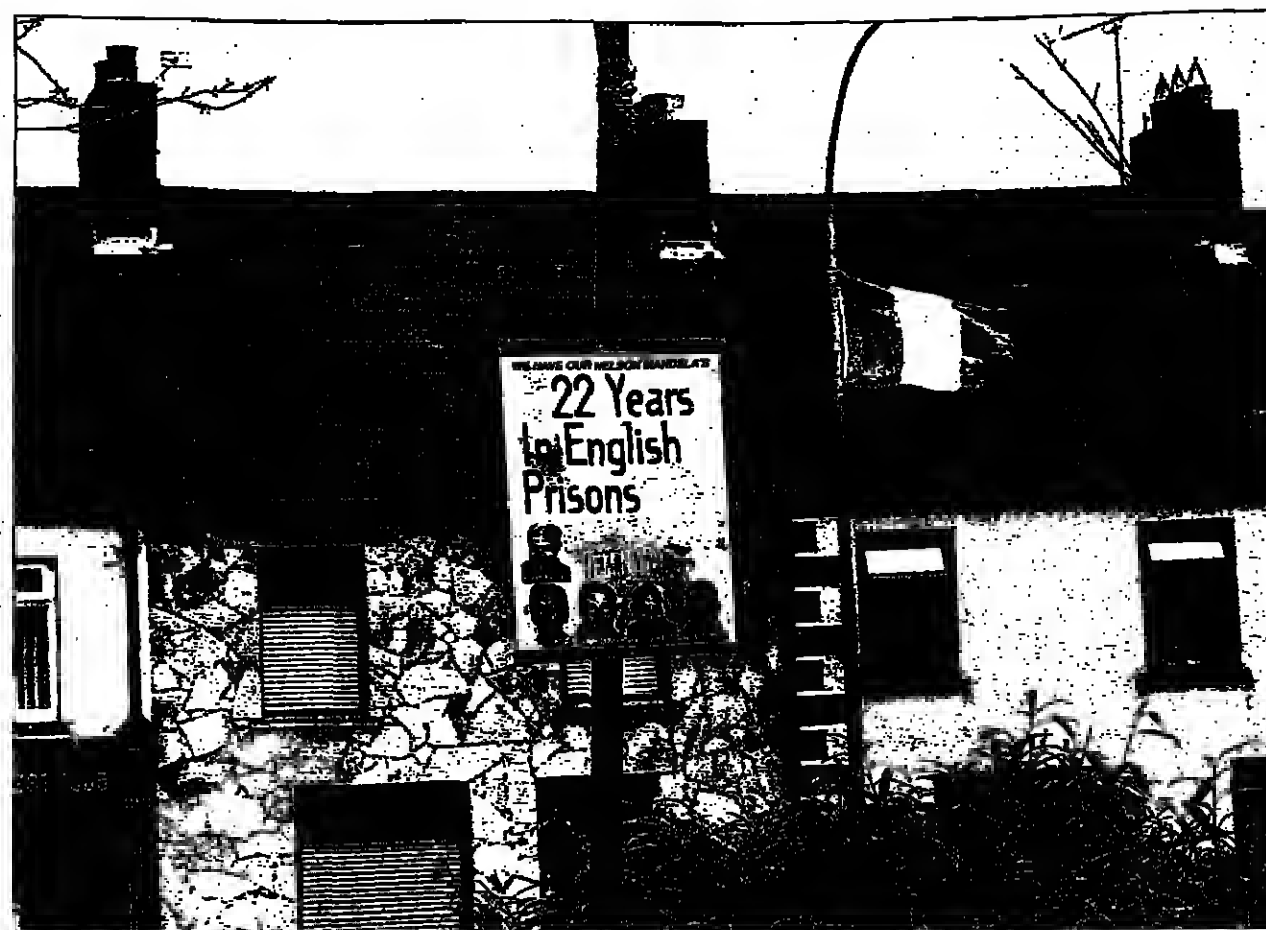
Academics and other com-

mentators differ on what percentages would indicate a clear majority of Protestant voters in favour of the accord. Estimates range from 65 to 75 per cent.

With the Catholic community solidly in favour of the agreement, it is these undecided Protestants who will be targeted by Tony Blair when he flies to Belfast today in a late push to make pro-accord converts.

Some commentators yesterday claimed to detect a slight swing in favour of the "Yes" campaign, though there is no up-to-date opinion poll evidence to confirm this feeling. A poll published yesterday was based on fieldwork carried out between 8 to 10 May, before the "No" vote was boosted by the appearance of the IRA Balcombe Street gang at a Sinn Féin conference.

A reminder of violence came



A reminder of the republican view in Crossmaglen, South Armagh yesterday

Photograph: Brian Harris

yesterday when an explosive device was sent to a Dublin tourist office. Although no organisation claimed responsibility, it is assumed to be the work of a loyalist group. The device, apparently mailed from Northern Ireland, contained a small tube of explosive material packed inside a video case to-

gether with ball-bearings. Irish Tourism Minister Dr Jim McDaid linked it to the Northern Ireland agreement, but said the Dublin government would not be intimidated.

Mr Blair has spent an extraordinary amount of time recently campaigning for a "Yes" vote, keeping up a daily stream

of comments aimed at reassuring the voters. Today's visit represents his third to Belfast in recent weeks.

Speaking on a BBC phone-in programme yesterday, said he believed there was a real chance of defeating terrorism if there was a "Yes" vote. He said: "My view is that if we get this agree-

ment endorsed in the referendum, splinter groups will find it very, very difficult to operate indeed. If these people go back to violence they will get nothing from the US, from the outside world." He added that he wished to give those allied to the main paramilitary groups an opportunity to become democrats.

Many protestants will vote "no" in Friday's referendum. **Kim Sengupta** went to Unionist Sandy Row in south Belfast to ask why.

Samuel McDonald, 47, painter:

"I did want to vote yes, because most of us want peace. However the more I looked into it the less satisfied I became. I'm not happy about the prisoners being released, and I am not happy that at the same time they are reducing the number of police officers. I don't think Sinn Féin will lay down their guns. So what do we achieve by voting yes? I frankly don't think this agreement is going to work. I'm sorry to say so, but there you are."



David Redfern, 72, pensioner

"I don't think this agreement does anything for us. I think, this can only lead to a United Ireland. Why should Dublin have any say in how I live. It seems to me that all that happened is that politicians like David Trimble have sold us down the river. I also don't like all these politicians, Blair and Clinton, telling me what to do, I can think for myself. I am British and I don't need an American telling me what to think."



William Smith, 64, retired company director.

"Put quite simply this agreement is a sell-out. The other side have got almost everything they wanted, and we have been forced to give up far too much. A lot of people have suffered in the bombings and they must feel angry that these people of violence seem to have got what they wanted. I've got very little faith in the politicians who have agreed to this. They must have known that this thing wasn't right."



Elizabeth Smith, 73, pensioner:

"All of us want to see an end to all of the bombings and shootings. I thought that what they've agreed to can end the violence then I'd be the first one to sign. I don't think it's going to. I think the terrorists have simply won and I don't think that the prisoners should be released. No one around here wants to vote for this agreement. Of course we want our young people to grow up in peace, but this is not going to do it."



Alan Gurney, 64, pensioner:

"Four months ago a relation of mine got shot by republican terrorists - and this was when the ceasefire was supposed to be in existence. So there's no reason why I should vote for this peace agreement, because we can see that these people have not put away their guns. All my family feel the same way. None of them will be voting yes. I think one would have to be very silly to think that signing this thing will get rid of terrorism."



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Families failing to keep in touch

By Glenda Cooper
Social Affairs Correspondent

FAMILIES are seeing less of their relatives - unless they want to borrow money from them, according to a new report.

The Family Policy Studies Centre has found that couples with children have less contact with relatives than they did a decade ago. Contact with grandmothers is down by 10 per cent.

The fall in family contact partly stems from increased geographical distance between relatives, but even taking this into account contact has still fallen. There is also evidence that people phone each other less.

Among young middle-class families there has been one of the biggest declines in seeing relatives, with a drop of nearly one-fifth in the proportion who report seeing their children's grandmother every week.

Paradoxically those with dependent children appear to be less "family-centred" than those without. But despite the decline in family contact couples with children are more likely than those who live in the traditional two parent family according to a new report by the charity.

Fifteen per cent of the calls the helpline receives are now about family relationships and parents splitting up - the largest category after physical or sexual abuse. The report recommends mediation for children when their parents are divorcing.

In The Eye

Charity begins again - an interview with Cy Coleman, the man who writes 24-carat gold hits

IN BRIEF

PC 'stalked by inspector after making complaint'

A DOZEN police officers who answered a woman colleague's call for help were amazed to find that her "attacker" was an inspector, a tribunal was told yesterday. Constable Barbara Anne Harwood said she radioed for assistance because she was afraid of Inspector Colin Meads and feared for her safety.

She broke down in tears as she told of her fears after the inspector approached her in a glass corridor at Heathrow airport where they were both stationed. "He kept coming towards me and would not leave me alone." The tribunal in Croydon, south London, heard that the incident came after she had made a complaint about the inspector's criticism of handling of a case. PC Harwood, 35, from Wokingham, Berkshire, is claiming sexual discrimination against the Metropolitan Police and Insp Meads. The hearing continues today.

Prostitute killings: man held

A MAN was being held last night in connection with the murders of two prostitutes four years ago.

The body of 20-year-old single mother Saima Paul was found near Swinford, Leicestershire, in December 1993 and 30-year-old Tracy Turner was found dead three months later at nearby Bitteswell. Both women came from the West Midlands and had worked as prostitutes.

Leicestershire police said a 33-year-old man was in custody at a police station in the county after being arrested earlier yesterday, but refused to comment further.

Painted grass is last straw

BIRMINGHAM'S painted green grass has cost a top city politician his job, it emerged yesterday.

Coun Gurdev Manku was sacked only days after the transport department he controls sprayed the grass in Sheldon so it would look greener to world leaders arriving for the G8 Summit. He denied responsibility, but a Labour Group source said: "His department has been responsible for one embarrassment after another and I am afraid this was simply the last straw."

Threat to teacher trainers

COLLEGES and universities that offer substandard teacher training will be closed, Estelle Morris, the schools minister, said yesterday. She said that their failings would be exposed in new league tables, to be published in September after inspections by the Office for Standards in Education, and those that did not improve after being given help would be closed.

Vaccine compensation raised

COMPENSATION payments to children damaged by vaccines are to be raised from £20,000 to £40,000, the Government announced yesterday. Vaccine damage payments are made to people who have severe mental or physical disablement of 80 per cent or more as a result of vaccination against one of a group of specified diseases. The increased payments would apply to new claimants after parliamentary approval.

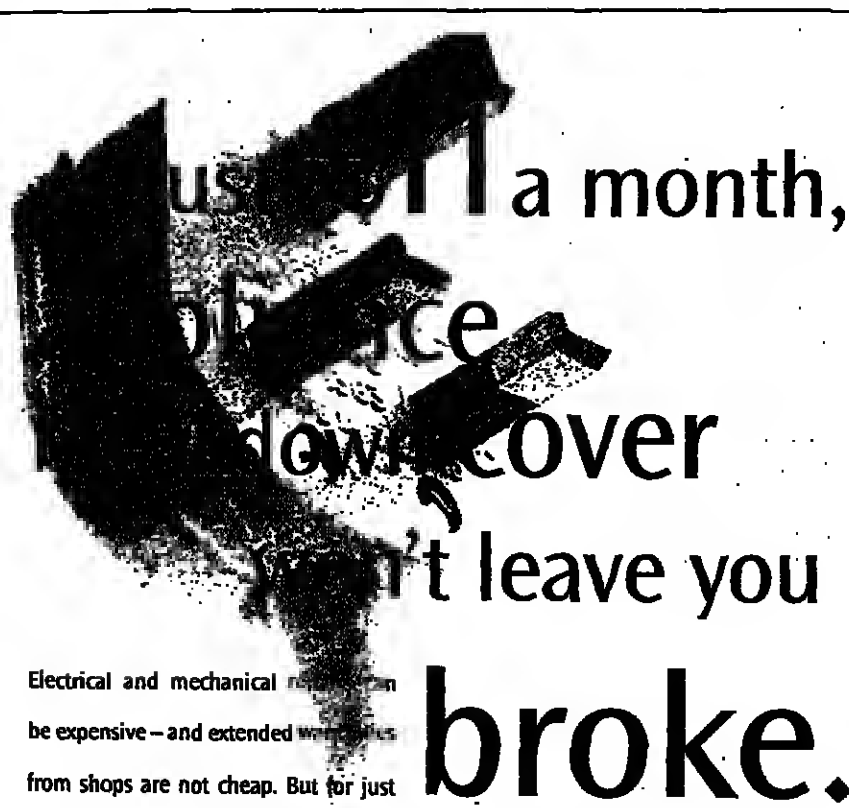
Sunshine 2: TV-football 0

ITV is blaming an early summer heat wave for attracting the lowest FA Cup final viewing figures in 10 years last weekend.

An overall average of 7.8 million viewers tuned in to the Arsenal vs Newcastle United match at Wembley on ITV, with 900,000 turning to the simultaneous live coverage on Sky. ITV's share of the total viewing audience, in its first exclusive terrestrial broadcast of the fixture, was 65 per cent throughout.

Jail for hedgehog killer

AN 18-YEAR-OLD student was jailed today for 90 days after roasting a hedgehog in a microwave oven. Lee Burden, from Birmingham, admitted a charge of cruelty with intent to cause unnecessary suffering at Hecley Magistrates' Court, Oxfordshire.



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No reprieve for duty-free shops

By Katherine Butler
in Brussels

EUROPEAN finance ministers squashed hopes yesterday of a reprieve for duty-free shopping. A final attempt by the Irish government to force a rethink failed at talks in Brussels despite strong support from the French and German governments and a change of heart at the last minute by Gordon Brown, the Chancellor.

Such was the determination by a majority to forge ahead with abolishing the tax perk by July 1999 that only a minority of countries was prepared to back even an impact study into the consequences for jobs. Campaigners had pinned hopes on a study as it would have implied a reprieve.

Mr Brown, who has consistently appeared hostile to any revision of the 1991 decision to scrap duty free, staged a surprising turnaround by backing calls for a study as he arrived for the meeting. "This is a very im-

portant issue which affects consumers right across Europe and affects consumers in Britain as they travel abroad," he said.

He blamed the Conservatives for signing Britain up to abolition, and said he would have preferred a full inquiry into the employment implications. "I do not like the decision we have made today," he said.

Campaigners for duty free expressed dismay at the outcome but pledged to fight on. They claim that 23 000 job losses in the UK and 130,000 throughout Europe could flow directly from the decision. John Hume of the International Duty Free Confederation said: "We are going to reinforce our efforts now. As the day draws closer ministers will realise that this is economic suicide". Barry Goddard of the British Duty Free Confederation predicted that 17,000 jobs in the UK alone could be lost as a result of the decision.

Irish minister Charlie McCreedy acknowledged the defeat but took

heart from the strong support shown by the Germans and French and said lobbyists should not give up the fight. "It's never over till it's over," he said. Mr McCreedy said scrapping duty free had been agreed in 1991 in the expectation that duties on alcohol and tobacco would be harmonised, but this had not happened.

But Mario Monti, the European commissioner for the single market, said duty-free shops were a hidden subsidy for the consumption of alcohol and cigarettes. "What we have done today is to confirm a decision taken seven years ago. I have nothing against cigarettes and alcohol, but should we be asked to subsidise them?" Mr Monti said.

He agreed that the Commission would produce a report on the ways in which governments could attenuate any adverse consequences which might arise from the decision. This could be in the form of regional funding or state aid, he said.

Leading article, page 20



Elbow grace: Rev Simon Evans, left, takes lessons in basic self-defence from ex-policeman Peter Hodgkinson

Photograph: Nicola Kury

Perfect Night.

The BBC swept the board at Monday evening's BAFTA awards. Of the 32 awards, 23 went to BBC performers, programmes and programme makers. The results demonstrate our commitment to quality across the entire range of TV output. From current affairs to comedy. From drama to graphic design. We'd like to take a moment to thank all this year's winners: before we all go back to working on next year's.

Programmes

Best Comedy (Programme or Series)
'I'm Alan Partridge' BBC-2

Best Comedy Performance
Steve Coogan BBC-2

Best Light Entertainment (Programme or Series)
'The Fast Show' BBC-2

Best Light Entertainment Performance
Paul Whitehouse, 'The Fast Show' BBC-2

Best Actress
Daniella Nardini, 'This Life' BBC-2

Best Drama Series
'Jonathan Creek' BBC-1

Best Drama Serial
'Holding On' BBC-2

Best Factual Series
'The Nazis - A Warning From History' BBC-2

News and Current Affairs Journalism
'Valentina's Story' (Panorama) BBC-1

Technical & Craft

Best Editing (Factual)
'The Nazis - A Warning From History' BBC-2

Alan Lloyd Jones BBC-1

Best Editing (Fiction/Ent)
'The Lakes' BBC-1

Roy Sharrman

Best Make-Up/Hair
'Tom Jones' BBC-1

Best Photography (Factual)
'Polar Bear' (Wildlife Special) BBC-1

Best Photography and Lighting (Fiction/Ent)
'The Woman In White' BBC-1

Best Costume Designs
'Tom Jones' BBC-1

Best Graphic Design
'Election '97' BBC-1
Mike Afford/Ceri Kesteven

Best Sound (Factual)
'Airport' BBC-1

Best Sound (Fiction/Ent)
'The Lakes' BBC-1

Best Design
'The Woman in White' BBC-1

Original Television Music
'Tom Jones' BBC-1

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David Dimbleby

The Dennis Potter Award
Kay Mellor

BBC

You make it what it is

The British Academy Award is based on a design by Mike Lambie.

Clerics learn to lash out as well as reach out

By Clare Garner

IT WAS a picture of clerical modernity: a vicar with a mobile phone taking lessons in self-defence from a former police officer.

In the light of a recent survey showing that nearly one in 10 clerics has been attacked and nearly one in three threatened, the Christian Resources Exhibition, an annual event at Sandown Park, in Esher, Surrey, invited a former Metropolitan Police middleweight boxing champion to teach members of the clergy self-defence tactics.

The Rev Simon Evans, 38, of Telford Park, in Streatham, south London, has been threatened countless times. "It's usually when someone's trying to push my front door through at 2am and my wife and children are in bed," he said. "I can smell the drink on their breath and they come up with some elaborate story about why they want money. Then, when you start saying, 'We don't give money at the door,' their whole demeanour changes and becomes threatening."

The visits come in "fits and starts": sometimes he has two or three 2am calls in a week, and sometimes none for a month, but he always feels compelled to go to the door - every so

often it is "the genuine emergency". "They bit the time when you're going to bed or you've been asleep, when you're not thinking straight," he said. "I feel particularly vulnerable because I think they can catch me off my guard."

But next time, Rev Evans will be better prepared. Peter Hodgkinson, who set himself up as a self-protection instructor when he retired from the Metropolitan Police a year ago, taught him some basic defensive moves. "Simple skills work," he said. "They have to be techniques that people can realistically remember in high-stress, confrontational situations. We're talking about pushing, pulling, punching and kicking - those sorts of things."

Such defensive tactics may not come naturally to priests, who are usually trained to reach out rather than lash out, but according to a survey conducted by the Christian Resources Exhibition, more than one in three clerics would like some training in self-defence.

Mr Hodgkinson said he could not believe he was being asked to train clerics. "I thought: 'Surely I don't need to teach clergy about self-defence. You would have thought they would be as safe as anyone could be. But times are changing.'"

Dounreay officials order shake-up of key safety jobs

By Charles Arthur
Science and Technology Editor

MANAGERS at the Dounreay nuclear reprocessing facility have thrown the privatisation of staff jobs into reverse, after a series of potentially disastrous incidents in recent weeks.

The shake-up, involving more than 60 key jobs overseeing and ensuring safety, shows that the UK Atomic Energy Authority - which operates Dounreay - is under increasing pressure to raise safety standards, with inspection visits due next month from the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate (NII) and MPs concerned that the plant has become an unsafe liability.

Dr Roy Nelson, the site director, said yesterday in a letter to all 1,400 staff that "none of us should be complacent about our safety performance" and admitted that "some of the criticism [of recent events at Dounreay] is deserved".

The changes include sifting six extra radiation protection advisers on the coastal site near Caithness, northern Scotland, transferring 20 managers from privatised contractors to the full-time staff of the site, and hiring 40 more people to work in engineering.

Dounreay has come under the microscope since the Government volunteered it to reprocess spent reactor fuel from the former Soviet republic of

Georgia. Since then there have been a number of accidents, including a major power failure when a mechanical digger cut through the main power cable and the emergency back-up power system failed to take over.

Managers at the site have been criticised over the latter incident because they waited for an hour before declaring an emergency.

The plant, which opened in 1954 to produce plutonium for Britain's weapons programme, has suffered a series of safety lapses - the most dramatic coming in 1974, when material in an underground storage shaft exploded, blowing off a concrete plug. Making it safe, the aim of an ongoing project, will cost at least £400m.

Dr Nelson made it clear that "UKAEA has already decided that a stronger in-house management team is desirable", and that privatisation of senior posts will be reversed after 2001, when its contract with consultants WS Atkins ends.

Dr Nelson said: "We must learn lessons from past mistakes and take remedial action promptly where we can see that it will help." He added: "Safe and responsible operations at Dounreay will only be achieved with the full commitment of everyone on site."

The NII inspection will be one of the most exhaustive ever performed.

هذا من الأصل

'Supertax' proposed on second homes to support rural buyers priced out of market

By Esther Leach

LYNN WALKER counts herself very lucky. She lives in one of a handful of three-bedroomed houses built for locals only in a Lakeland village where at least 70 per cent of the houses are either holiday cottages or second homes.

She waited months to move into the pebble-dashed house in the village of Chapel Stile, near Ambleside, where she has lived with her family for 15 years. "I would never give up this house easily, simply because there would be nowhere else to go. As it is my son who works in Ambleside and his family could only manage to find a flat."

Mrs Walker, 47, was speaking as South Lakeside District Council agreed to set up a working party to explore ways of introducing a "super-tax" on second homes through a private member's Bill.

"These houses," she said turning to look at her own, "are part of the answer but only a few are built because of a shortage of land or because of planning difficulties. I think there ought to be more but it's not so simple when you live in a rural park."

"I do think second home owners should pay their way by contributing to the cost of living here. They shouldn't get away with paying half the community charge."

It is a sentiment shared by Nelly and Fred Mallet, both in their seventies, who have lived all their lives in Chapel Stile. "We have nothing against the people who have second homes or run holiday cottages here; we don't see them often enough to dislike them," said Mrs Mallet. "What we object to is the fact that some of them don't pay the full com-



"We've nothing against holiday cottage owners," say Chapel Stile locals. "We don't see them often enough" Photograph: Richard Rayner/North News

munity charge as we do. And if you think that most of us have to save up to pay this tax, it really does rankle."

"If they paid up perhaps the council would have more money to spend on services and then we would all benefit. Some of the holiday home rents are £400 and £500 a

week. Surely they must be able to pay more in the way of taxes than they do."

The district council yesterday agreed to Councillor Stan Collins' motion call for a working party to be set up. He wants to take the problem, which he described as destroying communities, to the House of

Commons, arguing that a supertax would generate income to build affordable housing for locals.

He said second-home owners contributed very little to local communities but benefited from the "inducement" 50 per cent community charge discount the council was

forced to give them. He reckoned the council loses £1.7m a year because of it.

Another loss to the council, he said, was the income from commercial holiday homes whose owners pay a non-domestic rate straight to the Government. Any returns the council got by way of

grants he argued was "misconduct".

He wants the district council and other local authorities to be able to charge a four-figure sum tax on second homes with the money earned dedicated to creating affordable housing for local people.

Soldier's wife was 'groped' by chaplain

AN ARMY chaplain touched a soldier's wife's breast before asking her to make love to him, a court martial was told yesterday.

Captain Richard Landall put his hands down her knickers as she was changing a video for her daughter and tried to kiss her on the lips. The 41-year-old chaplain had also made saucy remarks to another soldier's wife, wolf whistling at her and shouting "Phwoar" from his car window as he drove past.

The court martial in Tidworth, Wiltshire, heard that Capt Landall was "a flirt" and found it difficult to control his amorous nature.

The chaplain to the 2nd Battalion Royal Regiment of Fusiliers denies four charges of indecently assaulting a soldier's wife and an alternative of harassing her, as well as harassing Fusilier Sean Brazier, harassing Shelly Brazier and conduct to the prejudice of good order by undue familiarity to Shelly Brazier. The alleged incidents took place during 1997 at Celle, Germany.

Lieutenant-Colonel Roger Lewis, prosecuting, told the hearing how Landall visited a soldier's wife who had sought counselling from him over marriage difficulties. He made "improper remarks" about her appearance, telling her: "I could fancy you."

A few days later Landall went with the couple to visit their neighbours for a drink. Lt-Col Lewis said: "During the evening the woman had her neighbour's infant daughter sit

on her knee. The padre sat next to her... [he] put his arm around her waist, under her jumper and squeezed her breast."

The hearing was told that, as he was fondling her, Landall asked her to make love to him before he left Germany.

The following day he sent her flowers and a note reading: "Thank you for being there for me. Sorry about my behaviour last night - too much to drink."

Just days later, Landall turned up at the woman's house as she was bathing three children, Lt-Col Lewis said. "The padre went into the bathroom to join her and stood right up behind her, rubbing his groin against her posterior."

On another occasion Landall put his hand down the back of the woman's jogging trousers as she was kneeling down to change a video for her daughter. He then kissed her on the lips as he was leaving the house.

The hearing heard that Landall also showed a keen interest in Shelly Brazier, 27, the wife of a fusilier. Landall apologised in a type-written letter, saying: "I'm sorry for causing you any offence and embarrassment... Unfortunately I'm a flirt and have been all my life. I know I will have to curb and control my flirting... or I will be in deep trouble."

Mrs Brazier denied suggestions by defence counsel Alison Barker that she had turned an innocent friendship into something more smutty.

The hearing continues. Leading article, page 20

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Euro could create another Bosnia, says Hague

By Anthony Bevis
Political Editor

A DIRE warning that the single currency could turn Europe into another war-torn Bosnia, or an unstable Indonesia, was issued by William Hague last night.

Delivering a speech that will delight Conservative Euro-sceptics and dismay pro-Europeans like Kenneth Clarke and Michael Heseltine, the Tory party leader echoed the long-standing warnings of Lord Teb-

bit - that extremism, and violence could be whipped up by the creation of an artificial European superstate.

"Push political union beyond its limits," he said at the Fontainebleau business school he himself attended, "and you jeopardise the very peace, stability and prosperity which Europe's post-war statesmen were so anxious to secure. My fear is that the creation of a single currency will take European political union well beyond its acceptable limits."

For good measure, Mr Hague

noted that the euro would be irreversible, and added: "One could find oneself trapped in the economic equivalent of a burning building with no exits."

But it was his warning against the political consequences of the drive to a superstate that will excite the Euro-sceptic right of his party.

"The lesson of Yugoslavia and the Russian Federation is that it is dangerous to force disparate peoples into a common political unit unless they already feel a sense of national

affinity," Mr Hague said. "In Asia, those countries that have had the most violent reactions to the financial crisis have been those countries that do not have the safety valve of democratic elections. How will the peoples of Europe react to a recession without the electoral means of changing the people responsible?"

In a speech riddled with fear and foreboding, Mr Hague said: "I fear that the European Union is in danger; in danger of accepting without debate a political destination agreed

40 years ago, in danger of proceeding with political integration not because it is right, but because it is said to be inevitable."

Those fears were fuelled by economic, strategic and political arguments, but Mr Hague added: "I fear that a single currency could push us beyond the limits to union."

"It would be to cross a line and abandon the independence of nation states with all the consequences for the future stability of Europe which I have set out today."

"The centre would have more power than the component parts. It would have neither legitimacy nor accountability since there can be no real accountability except in nation states."

"That is why I fear the political consequences of the single currency. For this reason the British Conservative Party is against British membership of the single currency now, and subject to a ballot of party members, intends to oppose it at the next general election."

Earlier, Mr Clarke, the former

chancellor, warned that if Mr Hague could not reunite the Tories over Europe, "we aren't going to win any elections, we aren't going to come back from Opposition."

He urged his leader to go beyond the familiar litany of opposition to the euro for another nine years - through to the end of the next Parliament. "We have had 25 years since we signed the Treaty of Rome of people telling us that our national identity is at risk and our democracy is threatened. It hasn't happened."

MP aims to lower gay sex age limit

By Anthony Bevis

AN EQUAL age of consent for gays, lesbians and heterosexuals was backed by a Labour MP and her gay son yesterday - ahead of a Commons vote that is expected to push the reform through next month.

Campaigning for a reduction in the age of consent for gays and lesbians from 18 to 16, Ann Keen, MP for Brentford and Isleworth, told a London press conference: "What parent would want their child to suffer in any way, to feel different or ashamed? We need to give them self-esteem."

Her son, Mark Lloyd-Fox, 31, director of development at The Commonwealth Institute, said: "It's difficult for all lesbian and gay people when the environment around you is bombarding you with everything heterosexual. To grow up with that being the expectation of the norm, and to feel different, and then to have that legal difference that makes it feel criminal, that makes things much more difficult."

The age of consent for gays and lesbians was lowered from 21 to 18 in 1994, amending the Sexual Offences Act, which legalised gay sex for the first time in 1967. But a Commons free vote to create a common age of consent was defeated by 307 votes to 280. Given the strength of Labour's majority, it is expected that MPs will vote overwhelmingly for equality before the law when an attempt is made to amend the Crime and Disorder Bill next month.

Angela Mason, executive director of Stonewall, the gay rights campaign group, said she was confident that if it went through the Commons, the Lords, too, would back it.

"I don't think there will be any attempt by the Right to bring out the backwoodsmen and overturn this amendment," she said.

OutRage!, another lesbian and gay rights group, will this morning be staging a protest outside the London Oratory School, on the 10th anniversary of the enactment of the Section 28 ban on the promotion of homosexuality by local authorities.



MPs joined protesters against the fur trade outside the Commons yesterday. Sweltering in a metal cage were (from left) Ian Cawsey (Lab), David Lepper (Lab), Norman Baker (Lib Dem), Mike Hancock (Lib Dem) and Vernon Coaker (Lab). Photograph: Andrew Stuart/PA

Blunkett presents £20m grant for 20,000 childcare places

By Glenda Cooper
Social Affairs Correspondent

CHILD CARE campaigners yesterday said that the national childcare strategy - creating a million places for children - was a "once in a lifetime opportunity", while warning that the proposed expansion must not be at the expense of quality.

The Government finally unveiled its Green Paper on childcare, pledging to make a "real difference".

David Blunkett, Secretary of State for Education, announced an extra £20m to provide 20,000 childcare places, as well as including £4m to train childcare workers and an extra £2m to fund the development of local childcare partnerships.

This adds to the £300m pledged by the Chancellor in last year's Budget to establish new

childcare places over the next five years. From September, every four-year-old is guaranteed a free nursery place. The childcare tax credit for working families will also cover childcare costs of up to £105 a week for a family with two or more children.

Harriet Harman, Secretary of State for Social Security, said the strategy marked an end to public policy that was neither "child- nor family-friendly". "For too long, public policy was made by people who thought nurseries were somewhere you visited on a Sunday to buy your bedding plants," she said.

Local authorities will have to carry out a "Domesday audit" of the childcare in their area by the end of the year, so that targets can be set in the next Budget.

"Our aim is to ensure good quality affordable childcare for children aged up to 14 in every

neighbourhood in England," said Mr Blunkett.

The Daycare Trust today welcomed the plans, saying it was a "once in a lifetime opportunity to close the childcare gap". The Trust's director, Collette Kelleher, said: "Now the Government must provide the resources and guidance to make the strategy work. The challenge also lies with local authorities, training and enterprise councils and employers to work together to deliver the strategy."

Margaret Lochrie, chief executive of the Pre-school Learning Alliance, said: "The Green Paper delivers a clear promise to parents... However, there is a tremendous shortage of places... and there can be no guarantees that, in the short term, parents will be able to find the nurseries and pre-schools that they need."

Suzanne Moore, page 21

Unison throws down challenges to Blair

By Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

LABOUR'S largest union affiliate yesterday urged the Government to abandon attempts to involve business in the public sector and called for a minimum wage £1 an hour higher than the figure expected.

The Unison public-service union also expressed misgivings about the employment-rights package due to be announced tomorrow. The union also nominated a representative for Labour's national executive who will be considered "off-message" by Downing Street.

Delegates to Unison's political conference in Torquay voted for abolition of the Private Finance Initiative, which the Government is pursuing as a means of winning private finance for public projects. The

80 delegates insisted the proposed statutory national minimum wage should be £4.61, whereas later this month the Low Pay Commission is expected to recommend to ministers a figure of £3.60.

Unison's senior activists selected the increasingly prominent Anne Picking as one of its two representatives on the party executive. She replaces Christine Wilde, who has been held partly responsible for the union's inability to bring a left-wing influence to bear on Labour. By a 41-39 majority the conference defeated a motion that would have committed Labour's most influential group to the repeal of all union legislation since 1979. It would have allowed unfettered secondary action and paved the way for unions to alter their rule books to allow strikes without ballots.

New move to clear pilots in Chinook crash

By Colin Brown
Chief Political Correspondent

THE families of two dead RAF pilots yesterday presented new evidence to the Ministry of Defence to clear them of the "shut" that they were to blame for the Chinook helicopter crash in which 25 top security officers died.

But the Armed Forces Minister, John Reid, said last night that the evidence appeared to be "recycling old theories" although the MoD would review their claims.

His response disappointed an all-party group of MPs which had backed the families in calling for a review to clear the two pilots, Flt Lt Jonathan Tapper and Flt Lt Rick Cook.

They were found guilty of "gross negligence" by an RAF tribunal.

Menzies Campbell, the Liberal Democrat spokesman on defence, urged George Robertson, the Secretary of State for Defence, to open a fresh inquiry. "I remain convinced that there has been a miscarriage of justice here," he said.

The families believe the navigational computer software may have been to blame for the helicopter crashing into a hillside in thick fog on the Mull of Kintyre killing all 29 on board. The board of inquiry found pilot error was to blame.

A former RAF test pilot Squ Ldr Robert Burke and Malcolm Perks, an expert in aviation computers, told the MoD that a more likely explanation for the accident included the possibility of a control "jam" caused by part of the flying controls becoming detached, and an engine "runaway" due to a failure of the aircraft's FADEC computer software.

"These two were first-class pilots, some of the best in the world. To have this shut against their names is quite intolerable," said Flt Lt Tapper's father, Michael Tapper.

Calling for a new official inquiry, he added: "It's bad for morale if pilots think that, whatever they do, if they have a crash, there is a chance they will be told they are grossly negligent."

Squ Ldr Burke said that when he was in the RAF he had been ordered not to discuss the crash with anyone.

"I have come to the conclusion that the verdict of 'gross negligence' is totally unfair. It is unjust," he said.

"If you blame the pilots, virtually everything else you can gloss over as a cause of the accident."

Mr Perks described the Chinook's FADEC system as "high risk". He also argued that the simulation used by the board of inquiry to recreate the accident had been "flawed".

The other MPs backing the call for the inquiry to be reopened were senior Labour backbencher Martin O'Neill, James Arbuthnot, a former Conservative defence minister, Robert Key, a former transport minister, and Crispin Blunt a former special adviser at the MoD.

The families' latest call for a fresh inquiry came 24 hours after the Commons Select Committee on Defence found that there was no evidence of "fundamental flaws" in the aircraft's basic design which may have caused the crash.

Dr Reid said yesterday: "The Ministry of Defence has taken no pleasure at all in the findings which the RAF board of inquiry found themselves obliged to reach."

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Suharto's offer of reform falls on deaf ears

By Richard Lloyd Parry and
Stephen Vines in Jakarta

INDONESIA faces more demonstrations today after a nationwide address in which President Suharto defied demands for his immediate resignation.

There was an air of disaster in the capital as shops, banks and businesses were boarded up. Expatriates and rich Indonesians fled out after the President warned of "bloodshed and even civil war" if the protests went ahead as planned.

He went further than ever towards conceding to demands for reform but his offer of elections later this year, after a revision of election laws, was not enough to satisfy the opposition.

"Indonesia will witness ... demonstrations all over this country," Amien Rais, the main opposition leader, said. "Especially after the nation listened to the very disappointing statement ... I think people will be more motivated to come down to the streets to protest. They will again and again and again stage the demonstrations ... until finally the old man goes for ever."

Mr Suharto's environment minister, Juwono Sudarsono, said later that the elections would be held within six months, and that there will be a new president by the end of the year.

But Mr Suharto's failure personally to set out a timetable did nothing to defuse the atmosphere of angry impatience among student demonstrators and their leaders.

In parliament there were tumultuous scenes as some 15,000 students, unhindered by soldiers or police, occupied the buildings and grounds, singing, dancing, drumming, waving flags and chanting slogans demanding the President's immediate resignation. In the debating chamber, a hand-drawn picture of a bleeding Suharto was pinned to the great

crest of the Republic of Indonesia, while students jumped up and down on the members' seats, and stood at the podium acting out parodies of leading politicians.

Last night several hundred students were camping out in the parliament, and all those questioned rejected the President's promises as a cynical attempt to hold on to power.

"We will stay here every night until our demands are met," said one student in the green blazer of Jakarta's University of Jayabaya. "Suharto must resign immediately, and there must be total reform."

Tens of thousands more are expected to converge on parliament today, although student leaders indicated that they would not take their protest out on to the streets for fear of provoking violence. Last Tuesday six demonstration students at Jakarta's Trisakti University were shot dead by police snipers, triggering two days of riots and looting in which 500 people died and 3,000 buildings and 1,000 cars were destroyed.

But big demonstrations by ordinary Jakartans are expected in other parts of the city, including Jakarta's Freedom Square, where Dr Rais is expected to appear. He has promised to bring 1 million people on to the streets.

On Monday the chief of the Indonesian armed forces (Abri), General Wiranto, hinted that any repeat of last week's violence would be met with military force.

"They were carried by the wave of freedom, and they disturbed the freedom of others," he said. "Abri has the role of stabiliser and safeguard of the constitution and national stability."

Apart from their visible presence on the streets in tanks and armoured cars, the security forces have done almost nothing to interfere with the protests since the Trisakti incident. Any order to use force

against peaceful demonstrators would severely test the unity of the military, which is suffering a power struggle of its own between Gen Wiranto and Lieutenant-General Prabowo Subianto, Mr Suharto's son-in-law. But the prospect of violence has had an electrifying effect on the capital.

In a statement the British embassy advised all its citizens to leave Jakarta and those who remained to stay indoors today. More than half the estimated 5,000-strong British community in Indonesia is believed to have left the country. Last night at Jakarta's international airport the departure terminal was under siege by foreigners and ethnic Chinese determined to leave before today's demonstrations.

In Chinatown, where some of the worst looting in the capital was seen last week, residents were prepared for the worst. "I am really afraid," said a young resident. "I don't know what will happen to us after the demonstrations".



Students protesting on top of the Indonesian Parliament yesterday in advance of President Suharto's pledge not to stand for re-election Photograph: AP

Rise and rise of the man who would be king

By Richard Lloyd Parry

IN THE six days since riots and demonstrations in Jakarta turned into something close to a popular uprising, Indonesians have crossed many thresholds. One of the most striking occurred two days ago in a chamber of the House of Representatives. The room contains only one item of colour: the golden Garuda, or mythical eagle, of the Republic of Indonesia, flanked on one side by a stern portrait of the president.

A man in traditional head-

dress, Indonesia's only credible opposition leader, has promised to bring 1 million people on to the streets of the capital today. Even if he enlists a small fraction of that, it will be more difficult than ever to imagine President Suharto's 32 years in power lasting much longer.

Dr Rais's principal power-base has been Islam. As leader of Muhammadiyah, a social and religious organisation, he commands the loyalty of its 28 million members. In the past year he has widened his appeal by a simple means: almost alone of Indonesia's most prominent opposition figures, he has directly criticised Mr Suharto.

Dr Rais has not demonised Mr Suharto: this week he said it would be important to let him leave office without humiliation. During his speech Dr Rais presented a step-by-step programme of reform.

Student demonstrators know what they don't like about Mr Suharto. It is encapsulated in their slogan "Corruption, collusion and nepotism". But Dr Rais speaks in detail about moves to strengthen the judiciary and abolish political patronage.

Dr Rais has acquired a command of English that few Indonesians possess. He is straightforward about his ambitions. He said yesterday: "Yes, I am more than willing to replace him."

But two things make it hard to imagine a President Rais. One is the military, which still wields more collective power than any single opposition figure. The second is his personality. He is respected but not loved. Christians and other minority religions fear him as an Islamic populist. It is the bad luck of Indonesians that even the bravest among them cannot entirely be trusted.



Amien Rais: Indonesia's only credible opposition leader

dress was speaking about his travels around the archipelago. "I have ... come to one conclusion," he said, pointing at the photograph. "He has to go, and the sooner the better." The students present cheered; the politicians looked grave.

It is a crime to "insult" the president. Nobody had publicly jabbed their finger at his image, hanging in the toy parliament the President created for himself. Only one man could make such a gesture, and if Indonesia does rise up again today it will in large part be the responsibility of the same man.

Amien Rais, 54, the political scientist who has become In-



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Rwanda braced for return of the killer militias

By Mary Braid
in Kigali

COLONEL Frank Mugambage stretches his hand and cracks his knuckles. Rwanda, he insists, has defeated the Interahamwe extremists who incited Hutus to massacre 800,000 of their fellow Tutsi countrymen as well as moderate Hutus in 1994.

But more than 18 months after a million Hutu refugees returned from camps in eastern Congo (formerly Zaire), where they had fled following a slaughter in which many of them had taken part, Mr Mugambwe, the Rwandan President Pasteur Bizimungu's chief of staff, is having a hard time convincing his traumatised nation that the murderers will never return.

The hard fact for the government, now led by Tutsis, is that the enemy has regrouped and is once again within. The *genocidaires*, who slipped back into Rwanda with the refugees or remained in Zaire, are making inroads in the north-west provinces of Gicoyi and Ruhengeri, the cradle of Hutu extremism.

The government denies United Nations and human rights groups' allegations that its troops — once hailed as heroes for ending the genocide — have wiped out communities in the north-west and inside Zaire accused of supporting the Interahamwe. Mr Mugambage said this week that Rwandan troops were disciplined and the situation was under control. Few outside the government accept that assertions. Most international aid agencies have pulled out of the north-west.

Politically it is difficult for the Tutsis, though they preach reconciliation and include Hutus in the government, to contemplate any political arrangement which involves them ceding

Colombians demand an end to murder

By Phil Davison
in Bogota

CHURCH BELLS around the nation sounded simultaneously yesterday as Colombians, sickened by the latest series of politically-motivated assassinations and massacres, marched for peace.

In Bogotá, residents oo foot or in cars, many wearing white or waving white handkerchiefs, stopped in the streets for three minutes of silence "in the hope that the guns, too, fall silent." Radio stations went off the air for the same period. Thousands of residents formed human chains, holding hands along main avenues before gathering in the central Bolívar square.

Carrying placards saying "We want peace," children marched in the worst areas of violence - the north-western Uraba region and south-eastern Meta province - where Marxist guerrillas or right-wing paramilitary groups control much of the countryside and the Colombian army has little control.

In the northern town of Barrancabermeja, residents marched after burying a dozen victims of the latest massacre.

control. The Tutsis carry with them the memory that every institution in Rwanda, from the church to the judiciary, was implicated in the slaughter.

The capital, Kigali, bustles with returnee Tutsi who fled to Burundi and Uganda to escape previous pogroms. Raised in refugee camps on dreams of returning to the motherland, they have come home to replace those who perished.

But their hopes that the conflict could be confined to the Hutu heartlands was shattered last month following attacks near Gitarama, only 45 minutes drive from Kigali.

This week Gitarama was swarming with government troops. The old extremists are audacious. "Two came out of the bush a week ago," says Venuste Hignro, who lives just a few minutes drive from Gitarama. "They demanded food and money from us and said the killers would follow." The village, torn between fear of the Interahamwe and fear of the army, reported the encounter to the soldiers.

Rwanda expelled Jose-Luis Herrero, the country's UN human rights spokesman, two weeks ago after he criticised Rwanda's first public execution of 22 convicted *genocidaires*. The government was already angry at UN allegations about atrocities and human rights groups' claims that people are starving in Rwandan jails, where 130,000 alleged perpetrators await trial. The government also snubbed UN secretary-general, Kofi Annan.

The government believes the UN, which failed to stop the 1994 genocide, can not assume the moral high ground. The row has split aid agencies. One charity official said: "It is not up to the international community to dictate to Rwanda how to

solve huge problems when it fed the Interahamwe for two years in the Zairean refugee camps."

Advocats sans Frontières, representing the *genocidaires*, says criticism of Rwanda for not offering fair trials is unfounded. Marie-elle Hallez, the body's coordinator, says the Rwandans have created a fair justice system despite pitiful resources.

And the executions, so the government argues, were needed to restore the rule of law and encourage the guilty to confess and testify against others in exchange for lesser charges.

Others insist international guilt about the genocide is encouraging people to turn a blind eye to government atrocities.



Refugees who fled to the former Zaire after the slaughter in Rwanda. Many refugees, however, were perpetrators of the genocide.

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Shock at aide's loose talk about Israeli PM's wife

By Patrick Cockburn
in Jerusalem

ROLLING HIS EYES at the mention of her name, David Bar-Ilan, senior aide to Benjamin Netanyahu, expressed his thoughts about Sara Netanyahu, the Prime Minister's wife.

"Look, Sara isn't the most stable woman in the world," said Mr Bar-Ilan. "She now appears only at appropriate events, receptions for children, events for mentally retarded or the handicapped, and that works well. That's okay. At last, Sara has turned into a boring subject for Israelis. Were she to run half-naked in the streets, it would be different, but she's under control."

Mr Bar-Ilan, a former concert pianist and newspaper editor who is politically on the far-right, is usually urbane and softly spoken. But yesterday the Prime Minister's office was politely wondering if he might not temporarily have gone insane. A senior Israeli official said: "If Bar-Ilan said such things then he's apparently lost his wits." Meanwhile, Israel is waiting to see if Sara will ask her husband to fire him.

It was a bizarre interview to give to the *New Yorker*. Apparently, Mr Bar-Ilan knew he was

on the record when he spoke to the magazine's correspondent David Remnick about the political difficulties created by Mr Netanyahu's admission of adultery on television in 1993. "It's one thing to have an affair with a *shiksa*," Mr Bar-Ilan said, using the derogatory Yiddish term for a non-Jewish woman. "Even rabbis do this with *shiksas*. But with a married woman?"

Nobody knows why Mr Bar-Ilan volunteered this information to Mr Remnick. Mr Bar-Ilan has been denying he said anything of the sort, though officials in the Prime Minister's office are quoted as saying he frequently makes derogatory remarks about Sara Netanyahu. They say he once comforted an office worker whom Sara had yelled at by saying: "Don't take her seriously. She has to be related to us though she's a three-year-old."

Sara Netanyahu has largely disappeared from public view since she fired a nanny for burning the soup and had the Prime Minister's security men forcibly eject her from the home. The former air stewardess is given to jealous rages, according to some witnesses, but there is no sign that she has influence on government policy. She is deeply protective of

her children. When one attended a kindergarten she insisted that a bodyguard be in attendance at all times.

In discussing the attitude of most Israelis to Mr Netanyahu's admission of adultery, Mr Bar-Ilan says: "For many years nobody in Israel cared about things like that. Moshe Dayan screwed half the women in the army."

That remark has angered the Dayan family, notably Yael Dayan, his daughter and a member of the Knesset, and her mother Ruth. They said they would complain about Mr Bar-Ilan to the attorney general.

The *New Yorker* article also quoted a United States official commenting on the cool relations between Mr Netanyahu and President Bill Clinton. "We relate to him [Netanyahu] as though he is the President of Bulgaria," said the unnamed official. "In fact, I think that Clinton went out on a run with the President of Bulgaria, so this comparison isn't fair."

The snideness of this remark reflects Mr Netanyahu's unpopularity in many quarters, but also frustration at his success. Despite endless negotiations, the US has been unable to get the Israeli Prime Minister to move on the Oslo accords with the Palestinians.



Sara Netanyahu: Described by Mr Bar-Ilan as unstable but under control

Photograph: Sipa/Rea

IN BRIEF

Mafia baron on the run

PASQUALE CUNTRERA, link-man between the Sicilian Mafia and Latin American cartels, eluded police 48 hours before Italy's supreme court was due to confirm his 21-year sentence for trafficking. Officers found no sign of the wheelchair-bound Cuntrera, 63, in his home near Rome. He was freed on 6 May when a court ruled on a technicality that there was no justification for extending the preventive detention of the man who ran one of the world's biggest drug-trafficking operations.

— Anne Honey, Rome

MPs defiant

MONTENEGRO'S parliament voted not to recognise a new Yugoslav government headed by the Montenegrin opposition leader Momir Bulatovic, named prime minister-designate by the Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic in defiance of Montenegrin warnings that the ousting of the outgoing federal premier Radoje Kotic was illegal.

— Reuters, Podgorica

Home alone

THE owner of a summer cottage in north-west Poland lost access to it after someone stole an 18-ton steel bridge leading to it. It was apparently cut into bits and hauled away. The owner had last visited his summer home in March.

— AP, Warsaw

US cracks Mexican banks' drug links

THE BIGGEST drugs money laundering ring in US history has been broken after a three-year operation, investigators in Washington and Los Angeles have announced. The targets of Operation Casablanca are some of Mexico's largest financial institutions, raising tensions once again across the Rio Grande, writes Andrew Marshall in Washington.

Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin and Attorney General

Janet Reno jointly announced the indictments. They said it was the first time that Mexican banks and bank officials were "directly linked to laundering the Cali and Juarez cartels' US drug profits." Cali, a city in Colombia, has been at the heart of cocaine smuggling; Ciudad Juarez is just across the border from El Paso in Texas.

A total of 112 people were arrested, and \$35m (£21m) in drugs money was seized as well

as two tons of cocaine and four tons of marijuana. Customs officers gathered evidence by "infiltrating the highest levels of this international drug trafficking financial infrastructure," Mr Rubin said.

The Mexican Finance Ministry and Attorney-General's office said that they would "co-operate fully with the US government".

The indictment charges that three banks, and 26 bankers,

laundered millions of dollars in drug profits. The three banks charged with laundering were Mexico's second and third largest banks, Bancomer and Banca Serfin, and Banco Compa. The British bank HSBC holds a stake in Serfin, and Compa is owned by Citibank. The Federal Reserve Board also filed civil actions against Banco Nacional de Mexico, Banco Internacional and Banco Santander of Spain.

Americans to raise retirement age to 70

KEEP WORKING: that, it seems, is the message for America's baby-boomer generation. Another five years of hard labour lies ahead of most Americans if a new retirement plan issued yesterday is accepted, writes Andrew Marshall.

The plan is an attempt to address concern about the shortfalls in America's social security system, which on current projections will not be able to pay out all the money necessary as

more people retire than come into the system. It would raise the retirement age to 70 by 2029 — it was already due to rise to 67 over the next few decades — and raise the early retirement age to 65 from 62 by 2017.

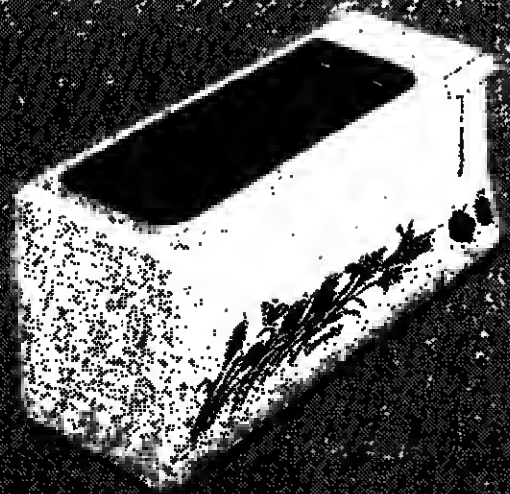
The plan is part of the revolution in pension systems that is sweeping the world as nations try to keep up with the huge in population caused by the post-war baby boom, rising costs and static or dwindling revenues.

It was drawn up by the National Commission on Retirement Policy, a bipartisan group of Congressmen, businessmen and academics, working with the Washington-based Centre for Strategic and International Studies. The plan touches one of the hottest topics in America: how to ensure people get what they need after they retire without bankrupting the US. Retirees are an influential pressure group in the US.

The core idea is to introduce a measure of private investment for the first time into the American social security system. At the moment, 12.4 per cent of a worker's salary is deducted from wages for social security, and matched by the employer. Under the new plan, 2 percentage points of that could be invested in stocks or bonds. The plan would keep the social security system solvent for at least 75 years, the panel estimated.

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Nelson Mandela, President of South Africa, with the Cuban President, Fidel Castro, in Geneva yesterday for the 50th anniversary celebrations of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)
Photograph: Reuters

Cook's dash to Turkey fails to heal EU rift

By Rupert Cornwell
in Ankara

HOPES of a quick thaw in Turkey's relations with the European Union were dashed last night as Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, failed to persuade Ankara to attend the annual EU/Turkey Association Council scheduled for Brussels next Monday.

By travelling as far as Ankara and back inside a single day, Mr Cook had hoped to convince Turkey of Britain's and Europe's anxiety to make a new start in relations, after the rupture last December in Luxembourg, when EU leaders refused to start accession negotiations – making clear there was no chance of Turkey entering the EU in the foreseeable future.

The idea had been that the association council take place on

the basis of an agreed new EU strategy document which would, in the words of British officials, "prepare Turkey for accession by bringing it closer to Europe in every field". But Turkey's Prime Minister, Mesut Yilmaz, and Ismail Cem, the Foreign Minister, left their visitor in no doubt that Turkey would only attend on its terms.

Yes, it had been a "useful" meeting, Ankara wanted the association council to be held, and preferably during the UK Presidency of the EU which ends on 30 June. But, warned Mr Cem, "only if everything goes as we want. Otherwise it can be held at a later date. We don't want it at any cost, without all the details being settled first."

The stumbling blocks are two. One is Turkey's lingering sense of hurt at what it sees as EU discrimination in the refusal

to set a date for accession, which Ankara would like to see reversed at the forthcoming EU Council in Cardiff. But there is scant chance of that.

The other problem, inevitably, is Greece, which is blocking the release of 375m Ecu (£250m) due to Turkey under its 1995 customs union with the EU, and would presumably veto any further promise of money. The Greek Foreign Minister, Theodoros Pangalos, chose the moment of Mr Cook's visit to reaffirm that veto, citing Athens' territorial disputes with Ankara in the Aegean.

Mr Pangalos also insisted that the association council discuss political as well as economic issues. Turkey is happy with the draft as it stands, which mainly expands the customs union into the fields of services and agriculture. But Greece wants hu-

man rights and other political topics to feature as well. That, say the Turks, must wait until the EU's "discrimination" is ended.

Mr Cook was stoical about the likely delay in the council meeting. "I'm not disappointed," he said. He will now make a fresh, but probably fruitless, effort to change Athens' mind.

Turkey has hardened its line on Cyprus, backing the insistence of Rauf Denkash, President of the Turkish Cypriot north of the island, that his statelet must be recognised before any involvement in the talks for Cyprus to accede to the EU.

Mr Cook paid a surprise visit in hospital to the leading Turkish human rights campaigner Akin Birdal, who was shot last week. No one has been arrested for the crime. Earlier the Foreign Secretary expressed his dismay at this "ghastly" crime.

Russia's hated traffic police set for an overhaul

By Phil Reeves
in Moscow

IT IS a selling job that would stretch the spinning skills of the slickest international advertising agency. Russia is trying to overhaul the image of the nation's most hated official – the traffic policeman.

The newly appointed Interior Minister, Sergei Stepashin, has embarked on a mission to clean up the profoundly corrupt GAI, the State Automobile Inspectorate, whose portly, swift-fingered, cops have come to symbolise official venality in the eyes of many Russians.

He has launched a public relations campaign to eradicate the force's widespread reputation as little more than a club for licensed highway robbers, and to adorn it with a "human face".

Thus, later today the GAI's most senior officer, Vladimir Fedorov, will spend several hours answering questions and complaints telephoned in by the readers of the *Komsomolskaya Pravda* newspaper.

The GAI's paramilitary iron-grey uniforms are being replaced with new outfits whose cheerful colours – bright lemon in some cases – will shine out against the monotonous hues of the Russian winter or a summer downpour. And the number of women in the force is being increased.

Nor is that all. The organisation is also likely to have a new name. Tacitly acknowledging that, to Russian ears, "GAI" (pronounced Gai-ee) has about as many positive connotations as the word "Mafia", officials have come up with a solemn, mouth-cluttering acronym: GIBDD – State Inspectorate for the Safety of Road Traffic.

The task facing Mr Stepashin and his aides is formidable. The force founded under Stalin in 1936 as an offshoot of the NKVD security apparatus is universally loathed and for good reason. Though far from angelic behind a wheel, Russia's motorists are continuously harassed by GAI officers, who do not need any reason in order to flag them down. It is not uncommon for a driver in Moscow

to be pulled over several times in one journey by officers, known as "gaishniki", who stand at most big junctions.

Bribery is not so much the exception as the rule. The average traffic policeman receives a mere \$120 (£75) a month – and that's often paid late. Backhanders, as in many areas of Russian life, have become a form of income supplement.

Motorists often reinforce the practice, as they would rather pay bribes than go through the time-consuming process of recovering confiscated papers. So widespread is corruption that some drivers no longer bother acquiring licences or documents, preferring to slip a bundle of roubles to any officer who is lucky enough to catch them.

The police's notoriety has spawned both its own micro-industry, china figures of traffic cops waving their batons have appeared in the shops. Stories abound of the GAI's skulduggery – from the officer who was harried off the streets of Moscow by his colleagues because he tried to be honest, to the cop who pulled over a car, announced he was tired of inventing reasons for imposing fines, but demanded a pay-off anyway.

Nor is the general level of fear and loathing helped by the occasional appearance on the streets of women wearing police uniforms who flag down vehicles for imaginary offences and pocket the proceeds. Although official efforts to clean up the force have so far failed, the authorities have not ignored the problem. The force's spokesman said yesterday that last year prosecutions were brought against 4,000 GAI employees, of whom more than half work on the streets. Of these, 470 were later fired.

The statistics are only the tip of an iceberg. It is hardly surprising, then, that Russians are less than optimistic that the clean-up will work. "Only time will tell," said the newspaper *Kommersant* earlier this month. "But, for now, the idea of a GAI with a human face belongs to the realms of fantasy".

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Tears and fury: the Ginsberg beat goes on

A year after his death, the life and work of one of the prime movers in the culture of dissent was celebrated by his friends. By Michael Glover

I TRIED the South Door. "You can't get in from this side," said two men, closing it on me just a little. After all, I might be hustling them for the loose pence in their pockets. "Try the main entrance in Piccadilly. Just follow the church around."

So I slipped past the Rentokil Control Point and a couple of Hooch bottles, still standing, until I found myself in the main courtyard of St James's Church, Piccadilly, amongst a crowd of devotees queuing for tickets. It all seemed so incongruous.

What were we doing was celebrating the life of Allen Ginsberg, New York Bowery hum, poet of subversion, Jewish/Buddhist celebrant of the delights of the body, in a Wren church of such chilling opulence with its Corinthian capitals picked out in gold leaf and its forests of plaster cherubs staring down so curiously from the barrel-vaulted ceiling? Would Ginsberg himself have felt at home here? Could it be because this church, like Ginsberg so often, had been spectacularly bombed out on one occasion?

I walk up the immensely tall, echoing nave. Just a drizzle of people so far, easily outnumbered by the gum-chewing camera crews. So pleased to be here. Just as pleased to be anywhere else by the looks on their faces. Three giant speakers are piled up together like biggedly-piegedly dice. There is a white guitar and a black one, and a huge Bechstein grand with its shark's fin yawning open. Beside the high altar, occupying its own small pew, is a giant photograph of the man himself, in hat, scarf, mac, and giant square-framed spectacles. He looks old, sallow, shrunken - and curiously respectable, too. He's all tricked out for death's long, chilly winter - or perhaps for New York's. The al-

lar cloth reads "Allelujah, Allelujah, Allelujah".

I last saw Ginsberg at close quarters in the winter of 1994 at the Guildhall, three years before he died. We were standing side by side at a urinal, "they do say all roads lead to the ocean," he remarked as two steaming arcs mingled, amicably and odoriferously enough, against the virginal-white wall. The time before that he'd been sitting beside me at a poetry reading in Cheltenham, listening to the publisher John Calder praise him to the skies.

Ginsberg was a small man with the boniest of knees, and I shall remember his subsequent performance to this day

a great spirit. And on Sunday night, one year and six weeks after his death, a pacific army of old Beats, which include Lawrence Ferlinghetti from San Francisco, first publisher of *Howl*, and now sailing intrepidly into his ninth decade; Michael Horowitz from Notting Hill Gate, and Anne Waldman, Ginsberg's "spiritual wife," a high-octane American performance poet who co-founded the Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics at the Naropa Institute, Colorado - gathered in London to say their public farewells to a treasured friend and an enduring inspiration.

The evening itself kicked off

Would Ginsberg himself have felt at home here? Could it be because this church, like Ginsberg so often, had been spectacularly bombed out once?

- the way his head wobbled so dangerously on his neck; the sight of that old harmonium of his, bouncing and jiggling about on his knees like some testy, spoilt baby who requires endless distraction. And the truly terrible tunelessness of his singing as he repeated, yet again, that refrain from William Blake's *Nurse's Song*: "And all the hills echoed." I adored the sheep noises emanating from that huge, fat-lipped mouth. But, my God, what a torture it was listening to him sing that same line over and over again. Would he go on until the stars fell out of the skies? He seemed so priapic, so carefree, so playful, though not at all well. And then, in May 1997, he died in New York, of cancer of the liver, and his friends around the world mourned the passing of

oot with the slow, thin, sanctimonious seepage of organ notes, but with a fuzzy, foot-stompin' trumpet blast from Jelly Roll Morton's Red Hot Peppers.

Then the compère, Michael Horowitz, who, just moments before, had been worrying about the fact that there was only one bottle of Evian water beside the mikes for all the artists to swig from - "we'll all be drinking shit," he'd remarked, "how very Ginsbergian..." - hopped up to explain why the event was being held here of all places. Because Allen had recently read in this church, and he loved its associations with his idol William Blake. "He and his brothers and sister were baptised here."

Then the liberated spirits streamed up, one after another.

The scouser Adrian Mitchell, in black horn-rimmed, elegaic spectacles recalled Ginsberg's appearance at the Roundhouse in the mid-Sixties, circling the audience, chanting and clinking his handbells. At the third circling, derision turns to wonder and delight, Mitchell remembers mistily. Oh yes, this outrageous dreamer of wet dreams about Che Guevara in the lush jungles of Bolivia, made trouble of the highest quality. "He was the prophet of the new bohemian revolution, our prophet, our poet," Mitchell helps himself back to his pew, stricken with emotion. Allen's photo winks at him from behind the giant votive candle, but Mitchell's back is turned away from him, humped in grief.

Then a surprised guest hurries across the chancel, dodging and weaving around the equipment, in the general direction of the Bechstein, a man of middling height with a head of wild, finger-raked hair and the droopy, lugubrious eyes of a bloodhound: Philip Glass.

About a decade ago, he and Ginsberg collaborated on a chamber opera called *Hydrogen Jukebox*. It included a poem called "Wichita", written by Ginsberg in the mid-Sixties as a protest against the Vietnam war. They used to perform it together.

"He would sit in the curve of the piano there, reading," says Glass, "and I would be inspired." Then he slap-bangs at the keyboard wildly, muddily, for six or seven minutes. The photograph hums along appreciatively. At the end, Glass lets his nose fall very very slowly until it is almost touching the keyboard. It remains there. Is it stuck? Is he dead? Nn. No.

But the most extraordinary tribute of all to the galvanising energies of this dead poet comes from his old friend and

poetical co-conspirator, Anne Waldman, who recalls his hyperactive last days in New York, which included hours of non-stop telephone conversations with friends around the world. Goodbye. Goodbye. Goodbye...

Waldman's poems are a sequence of furious, grief-stricken, savagely delivered assaults upon the sheer impertinence of death for having snatched her soul-mate away from her. "It's been a great ride," she recalls him having said. But can that ever be enough for the survivor? She re-

members those hours of sitting beside his noble corpse in the Buddhist Meditation Hall with the monks chanting.

"His face is extraordinarily handsome in repose. Does someone say he resembled Dostoevsky? Never again will he sit up late over a Chinese noodle bowl. Never again will his eyes water because of tear gas. Never again will he embarrass corrupt, dead presidents." Then comes the mantra, chanted wildly: "I breathed upon his body! Ohmm! Ohmm!"

When she walked away

from the microphone, her astonishingly flimsy scarf streams behind her like a haze of stars.

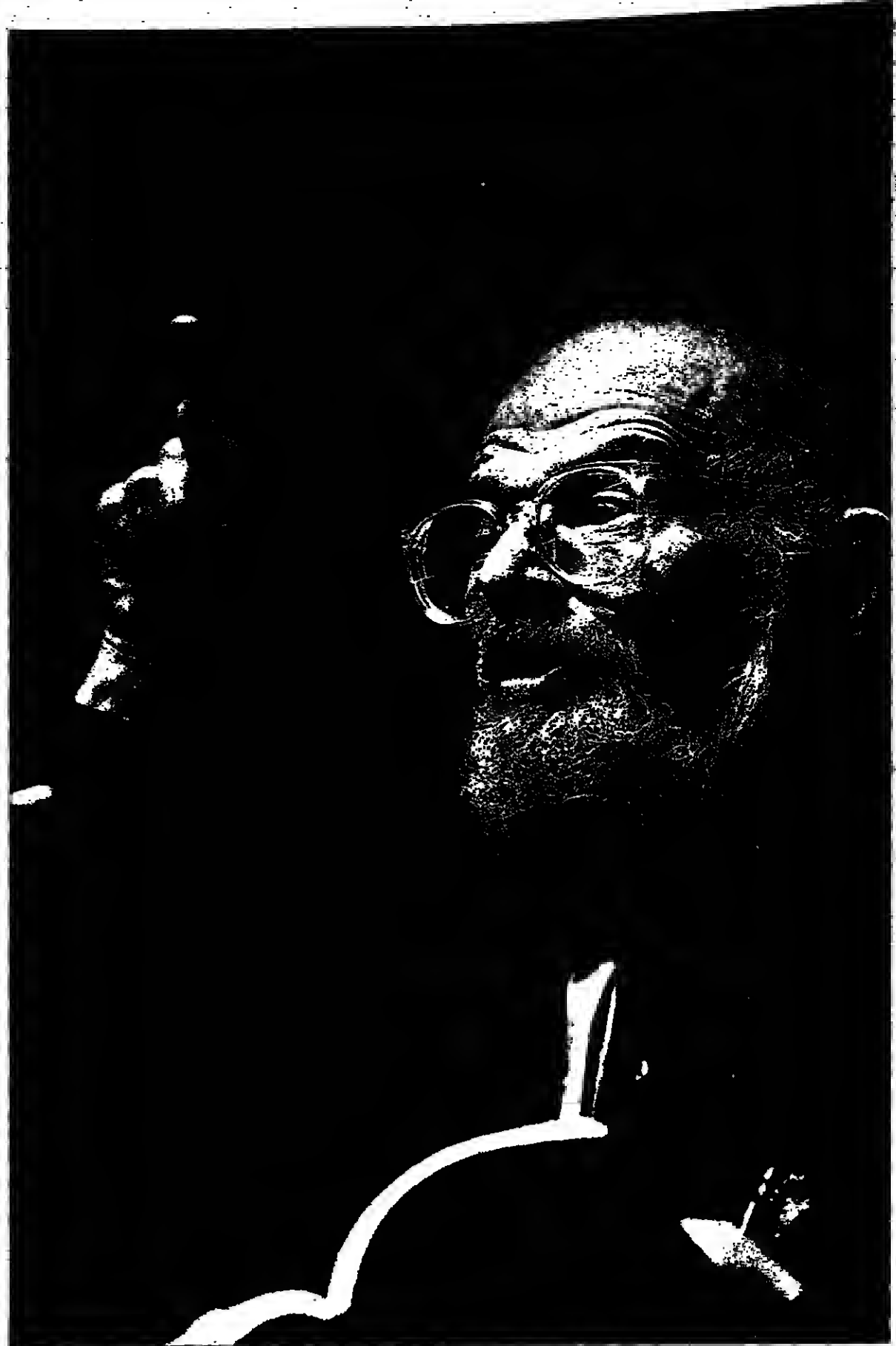
The emotional impact of Waldman's performance is so great that when that "national treasure" Lawrence Ferlinghetti slouches up to the microphone, loose-limbed, not in any hurry to be anywhere too soon, bald head on his shoulders like a long, stretched egg, the moment seems mildly anticlimactic.

And there is no matching fierceness in his manner, either, just one hand hooked into his belt, and the gruff-voiced,

heartfelt reading, which sometimes falls to a oar whisper, of a handful of poems that recall Ginsberg's needling humour when writing at his best: "America, I'm putting my queer shoulder to the wheel..."

Ginsberg seems a tender presence during these poems, close as a shadow. But death, the dark lover, caught up with him in the end. Not a single one ever escapes death's attentions.

Meanwhile, the photographers scuttle back and forth like undesirable rodents, and the Betacam cameras keep on rolling.



Allen Ginsberg in performance - priapic, carefree and playful

Photograph: Philip Meech

All he needs is laughter... and respect

Comedy has made Steve Coogan very rich, so why does he let a few critics annoy him? By Anthony Clavane



Steve Coogan is easily exasperated by 'arty-farty intellectuals'

IN ONE of the many memorable encounters from the spoof chat-show *Knowing Me, Knowing You*, a soul-baring new-wave comedian tells Alan Partridge: "I want to be funny - but with dignity." The king of sports-casual leisurewear replies: "Go on, do your Frank Spencer."

At the end of Steve Coogan's current show, he sends himself up, appearing as "Steve Coogan", a soul-baring new-wave comedian. And he says he wants "large groups of people to find me funny" while none the less craving critical respect: two Baftas this week, for Best Comedy Performance and Best Comedy Programme, suggest that he is managing both.

His love-hate relationship with what he calls "arty-farty intellectuals" emerges when he mentions that *I'm Alan Partridge* was voted best TV series of 1997 by BBC2's *Late Review*, "a show I really can't stand". As Alan might say, he's not just a "one-trick Partridge", yet most of us continue to identify him with the great man - a legend in his own roadside motel. This irks Coogan, despite the fact that the character is often spoken of in the same breath as revered British greats such as Basil Fawlty, Captain Mainwaring and Blackadder.

There is the inevitable Partridge segment in the show, but he also plays Tony Ferrino, Ernest Moss, Duncan Thickett and both Paul and Pauline Caff. He has been the voices of Neil Kinnock, Margaret Thatcher and Mick Jagger on *Spitting Image*, has appeared in straight roles on TV and the "legitimate" stage and won countless awards as a stand-up comedian.

Yet the urge to say "Go on, Steve, do your Alan Partridge," remains irresistible. Alan first appeared as a hapless sports

reporter on Radio 4's *On The Hour*, was promoted to the dizzy heights of Pringle-clad presenting on BBC2's *The Day Today*, became an overnight sensation as the Wogan wannabe in *Knowing Me, Knowing You*, but then tragically fell from grace as a divorced Radio Norwich jock in *I'm Alan Partridge*.

Coogan, his fans will be relieved to hear, still "does" Alan. Even if he wanted to, he could never kill him off. Loadsamoney, Stavros and Smashic might all have been swiftly disposed of by Harry Enfield, but

"It would be churlish of me," he sighs, "to say my characters are nothing like me. I would never claim to be completely rational and well-adjusted. There are bits of me in all of them. Besides, Alan is not a monster or a fascist. He's a little-England right-winger who likes the *Daily Mail*."

And, as with Coogan himself, loathes the *Guardian*. "It's their unquenching thirst for deconstructing everything which I hate. They've extended pages of nothingness, talking things into a soup. I really can't stand 'Pass Notes', with its glib attempts to be

funny. And the guide section is the most annoying part. It must have been written by computer, net-surfing, sci-fi nerds who are into cartoons like the *Simpsons* and *King Of The Hill*. I just wish all this post-modernism would go away."

The "Ferrino flap" write-ups clearly got to Coogan. Up until the Lishon Lothario's launch, he had known nothing but praise: *Spitting Image* and the London Palladium in his early twenties, an Edinburgh Perrier Award in 1992, *On The Hour* and *The Day Today* team and then universal acclaim for that chat-show host.

His insecurity is puzzling. In Britain, all successful performers will, at some point

in their career, fall foul of the critics. If 80 per cent of reviewers thought Ferrino funny, does it really matter what a few "elitist snobs", as he calls them, think?

"Yeah, I suppose I said before I don't care, yet clearly I do. The thing is, you want everyone to think you're great all the time. But in Britain, if there is unbridled success - a slight mistake - people go for you. The tabloids had a pop. They didn't like me because I didn't talk to them." In fact, they deemed him a sex-addicted love-rat ("A millionaire who owns a host of flashy cars and has a stream of glamorous women battling to appear on his arm," as the *Sunday Mirror* put it).

His mandatory backlash period ended years ago, yet the gainsayers still rile him. "They talk a load of rubbish really," he says. "I felt relief rather than pleasure when the reviews for *I'm Alan Partridge* were so good. You can't stop these backlashes, it's all about Schadenfreude. But I became insecure and paranoid. I thought they were really saying: 'Damn, it's actually good. That's how I read them. With a tour like this there's no ambiguity. You can't deny the fact that 2,000 people were laughing throughout the night. There's nothing to match adulation from large groups of people.'"

His end-of-show appearance as "Steve Coogan" is, he explains, an ironic homage to Mike Yarwood's legendary and this-is-me finale. He enjoys sending himself up as a prima donna. "You know the sort," he chuckles, "an obnoxious, precious performer." The type of comedian who wants to be funny, but with dignity.

Steve Coogan is on tour until 2 July. Telephone 0171-420 1000 for details.

هذا من اللاصل

With God on their side

Glenn Hoddle is not alone in seeking divine intervention to further his ambitions. In football, golf and tennis, devotion is the name of the game. By Simon O'Hagan

GOD may have made the world in only seven days, but even He might find His work cut out over the next few weeks. For in the biggest summer of sport there has ever been, it seems that there won't be a shot saved, a putt holed or an ace served without the great referee in the sky having something to do with it.

Like the so-called utility player - the type who can play in any position depending on the team's needs - God is a versatile fellow who means different things to different people. In fact, the term God is perhaps not quite appropriate in analysing an upsurge of spirituality in sport that has found its most vivid, and some would say disconcerting, expression in the England football coach, Glenn Hoddle.

The success of Arsène Wenger, the sophisticated Frenchman who has just led Arsenal to the Premiership and FA Cup double, is a measure of the increasing refinement of management techniques in football. Diet and mental training are now every bit as important as squat jumps and free-kick practice. But Hoddle's controversial espousal of faith-healing as a means to help England win the World Cup has taken sports psychology into an entirely new dimension.

We clearly should not underestimate the role of Eileen Drewery, the faith-healer brought in by Hoddle to talk to the England players. "It's a very personal thing, but one that works," Hoddle told BBC Radio 5 at the weekend. "She has contributed to our qualifying." Long since described as a born-again Christian but unwilling to refer to himself in such terms, Hoddle also revealed that he believed in reincarnation. "The body is just an overcoat," he said. "Take it away and your spirit goes into another life in the spirit dimension."

It's easy to dismiss this kind of thing as mere crankiness, with worrying if distant overtones of Davidicke, the goalkeeper turned cult-leader who announced that he was the son of God. And certainly one fears for Hoddle should England fail at the World Cup and the press use his unorthodox training methods as a stick with which to beat him.

Suspicion of anything new-fangled follows from a conventional strain that is still very much present in sports culture. But with many football clubs now having their own chaplain, the culture is changing, and Hoddle is by no means alone in believing that sport raises questions that can't simply be answered by an extra half-hour's weight-training or a bonding session in the pub.

The sports psychologist John Syer sees religion in sport as an extension of the sort of work he does, mainly in building teamwork. "As a mental trainer, you are working on people's attitudes, and I suppose spirituality is also about attitude. Likewise the experience of being in a good team is spiritual, in that it's the feeling of being part of something that's bigger than you."

The organisation Christians in Sport has grown steadily since it was founded in 1980. It has a mailing list of 10,000, and reports a particular increase in interest among young footballers. It's a trend that director Stuart Weir in part puts down to the pressures of the modern footballer's life. "A 16-year-old might be sweeping out the souvenir shop one season, and the next he's starring in the first team," he said. "How do you cope with that?"

A number of high-profile converts has also helped the cause. Kris Akabusi's brand of energetic Christianity helped him stand out in the athletics

scene of the 1990s, and others followed. "Someone not as strong-willed as Kris might be a bit reluctant to reveal that they were going to Bible study, but once his beliefs were known it became obvious that it wasn't just something for inadequates," Weir says.

Christians in Sport subsequently built a recruitment drive around a poster on which the slogan, "Who thinks Christianity is for wimps?" was accompanied by a photograph of the mighty rugby union player, and practising Christian, V'aiga Tuigamala. The athlete Jonathan Edwards and footballer Gavin Peacock are also prominent in the organisation.

Weir is sceptical about faith-healing, while respecting that "if you believe something is helping you, then it very well might". Nor, says Weir, is asking God to intervene on your behalf what sportsmen's beliefs are about - for all the claims made by Tafari, the Brazilian goalkeeper, that the Almighty has told him which way to dive so that he can save penalties.

"I'm very wary of people who tell you they are successful because God makes them win," Weir said. "The point about Christianity is that it should help you to discover self-value and to keep things in perspective."

Both of which provide handles on sanity in a frenzied, moneyed world of sporting celebrity that has left many a casualty in its wake. Bernhard Langer, the German golfer who is another leading light in Christians in Sport, famously missed a putt that would have won the Ryder Cup a few years ago, an experience that might have destroyed lesser men. He understood that his worth was not expressed in winning or losing golf tournaments. "There has only ever been one perfect human being, and we crucified him," he remarked later. "All I

failed to do was put a golf ball in a hole."

Individual sports, with their unrelenting emphasis on the self, are full of tales of spiritual quest. There is an abundance of how-to books for aspiring tennis players and golfers, all with their chapters on the inner being. Did not Arthur Ashe meditate his way to the Wimbledon title in 1975? No press conference given by the tennis player Michael Chang passes without reference to the role played in his life by Jesus Christ. And when Andre Agassi was asked how he reconciled reading the Bible with calling an umpire a "f***** bozo", he answered: "That's why I read the Bible."

A new self-help book, *The Golfer and Millionaire*, by an American called Mark Fisher, is really a parable in which a mediocre golf pro discovers a mentor who teaches him how to banish self-doubt in the form of a bejewelled, Devil-like character who lurks about the green trying to put him off his stroke. The player goes on to win the US Open.

Redemption, of course, is a recurring theme in sport. Although there has been nothing overtly religious about it, the process by which Tony Adams, the Arsenal footballer and one-time alcoholic, has come back from the brink to experience a glorious coda to his career and an evidently deeper meaning to life is surely worthy of the description "born-again".

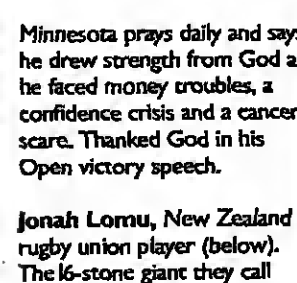
And when one looks at the endlessly troubled career of Paul Gascoigne, few would dispute his need for pastoral care. In recognising that, Glenn Hoddle has taken a step further than any previous England coach, just as he has by enlisting the services of Ms Drewery. If England come back from France as World Cup winners, her appointments book will be very full indeed.

THE GOD SQUAD



Michael Chang, US tennis player (above). Praises God for all of his success. Critics say his belief turned him from an athlete with average gifts into a top-class player. Chang's tennis philosophy: "I go out and play and everything else is in God's hands."

Tom Lehman, US golfer and 1996 British Open winner. The born-again Christian from



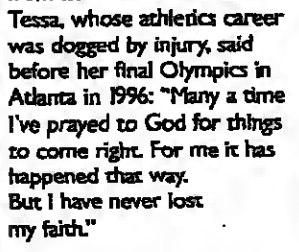
Jonah Lomu, New Zealand rugby union player (below). The 16-stone giant they call "The Whale" is a devout Christian who doesn't drink or smoke and is described as shy and "God-loving" by team-mates.



Tessa Sanderson, Olympic champion javelin-thrower (above). The veteran of six Games inherited her faith from her devout mother. Tessa, whose athletics career was dogged by injury, said before her final Olympics in Atlanta in 1996: "Many a time I've prayed to God for things to come right. For me it has happened that way. But I have never lost my faith."



Gavin Peacock, captain of Queen's Park Rangers. Nicknamed "The Rev" in the dressing room. Co-wrote a book called *Never Walk Alone*, with former Middlesbrough winger Alan Comfort, who is now a vicar in Essex.



Jonathan Edwards, World Champion triple-jumper (below). A life-long Christian and son of a vicar who is studying for a theology degree. — Mark Oliver



Glenn Hoddle has embraced the spiritual life. "The body is just an overcoat," he says

More McDonald's than Mitsubishi

ALL is not well in the hothouse world of Japanese schools in England. A couple of days ago at Gyosei International School, near Milton Keynes, 26 youngsters decided to rebel against the school's tough disciplinary regime. They had had enough, it seems, of being woken at 6.30am and expected to study until 10.30pm, of being forbidden to visit McDonald's and discouraged from supporting the local football team.

The teenagers, all boarders, barricaded themselves in their dormitory and chanted slogans criticising their teachers, according to one report. Another has been suspended and sent back to Japan after being involved in a row with a teacher over school rules which he said were "petty and stupid".

It is not easy growing up as a Japanese child in England. In fact it is not easy growing up as a Japanese child at all. Japanese mothers, determined that their children should be high achievers, drive them to study quite literally from morning to night. Five-year-olds lug satchels laden with homework; teenagers go to cramming in the

Students at Japanese schools in Britain can find themselves painfully torn between two cultures. By Lesley Downer

evening to up their grades so that they can go to a better university and there are regular reports of suicide among schoolchildren.

Education in Japan is like an escalator. The right university leads automatically to the right company. Even though the lifetime employment system is beginning to break down, high-fliers still want to enter the big corporations such as Sony, Hitachi and Mitsubishi, who recruit exclusively from Tokyo University, the Japanese equivalent of Oxbridge.

Put the Japanese school in the middle of an English town or village and the pressure becomes still greater. There are five Japanese schools here, in Acton, Hammersmith, Bury St Edmunds and Wrexham, as well as Gyosei in Milton Keynes.

Shitennoji School, near Bury St Edmunds, is like a little Japan in the middle of the English countryside. Most of the staff speak little or no Eng-

lish, classes are conducted in Japanese and the curriculum is the same one that prepares students for Japan's tough university entrance examinations back home. Yet whenever the students venture outside the school gates, they find themselves in a small English village. They need only watch English television to be aware of the more relaxed life beyond.

Japanese society is inexorably changing but it is still a nation of conformists. To quote the old Japanese saying, "a nail that sticks up must be hammered in". Anyone that has lived abroad is *de facto* a nail that sticks up.

So Japanese living and working in England send their children to Japanese schools so that they will not be at a disadvantage when they go home. There are also children who have been sent to England by wealthy parents in the hope that they will learn English - but in the disciplined environment of

a Japanese school. Quite how they are expected to learn English when most communication is in Japanese is another matter.

Fiona English, head of the English language unit at the School of Oriental and African Studies at London University, deals with Japanese students of university age who have come to Britain for the first time. "They have particular problems," she says, "both in terms of the educational culture and in terms of being out loose."

Occasionally students are so seduced by the social scene in London that they go AWOL. One girl student "found herself able to do far more than she could have done within the rigour of family and social constraints there would have been in her own culture. In the end she dropped out. She had found the whole experience all too much."

Another problem is the wide gulf between the Japanese

educational system and ours. "Japanese education up to first degree level at university is very much a matter of learning by memorising and being tested on what they can remember," Fiona English says.

One Japanese student could not understand why she kept getting low marks when she conscientiously wrote down everything she had learnt. "She was amazed when I told her about my eight-year-old son. When he was studying the Romans, he was shown pictures and asked to speculate about what was going on. In Japan they'd be told what was going on."

In Japan this year there have been riots in schools by rebellious children desperate to break out of the straitjacket forced upon them. There have also been recent cases of children murdering their parents or their fellow students.

Perhaps the rebellion at Gyosei is partly a reflection of the changes happening at home. In any case, when - if - the young rebels of Gyosei go back, no doubt they will take with them a new-found sense of freedom.

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WHAT'S HOT

Holly Wood



— Susannah Cohen

introduced a cruise and swimwear line, including glamorous all-in-one swimsuits and curly bikinis in classic black and white. The first Perle Florida shoes will be on sale, available exclusively — and affordably — at Debenhams from September.

"We pretty much lead the whole thing," says Ren Pearel of Pearel's 100 in 1. Debenhams keep in touch with the designers weekly and even a single item that reaches the shelves is signed off. "Our name is on it and we want to feel proud of it," says Ren. "The reason people come back and buy from the collection is we don't skimp on anything."

The same will apply to M. Booting, when his collection launches. But don't get too excited. You'll have to wait until next spring. In the meantime, if you haven't already been designer shopping at Debenhams, it's well worth taking a look.



هَذَا مِنْ الْأَصْلِ

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Straw calls the police to order

REFORMERS or reactionaries, Home Secretaries have to deal with two of the most powerful trade unions in the country. Margaret Thatcher took on teachers and the TUC, but even she quailed before the Prison Officers' Association. As for the Police Federation, she needed the constables' loyalty in the miners' strike and stuffed their mouths with the generous Edmund-Davies pay formula. So New Labour inherits two inadequately managed services. Police efficiency is suspect: too many corrupt officers leave the force undisciplined. Their pension arrangements, along with those for fire officers, are an actuary's nightmare. They are not alone in resisting change. As recent events at Wormwood Scrubs showed, prison officers are still allowed to substitute group solidarity for effective and fair delivery of penal custody.

But Jack Straw is crafty. One of us, say the Tories, albeit in private, he is Michael Howard's legatee: look, he is keeping the prison building programme going. But he misses the distance between his populist rhetoric—for example in the Mary Bell case—and his attempt to do some liberal good by stealth, for example in youth justice. As for police and prison officers, Mr Straw has set two slow fuses burning. The police have to agree to a major reform of the disciplinary code: prison officers have to give up strikes and disruptive action, and in return they become partners in the running of penal institutions.

It is a start. But Mr Straw must know that if the police and prison officers are as powerful and potentially obstructive at the end of this parliament as they were at the conclusion of the last, he will have failed to make a much-needed contribution to the project of modernising Britain by which Tony Blair has set such store. No one is denying the difficulty of the custodial services nor how much we, the public, take for granted those who police society's marginal members. But that does not emancipate them from effective management, nor the need to show they offer value for money—not the type of contracts now common elsewhere in the public sector.

It is not a question of breaking the unions, let alone preventing staff belonging to a legitimate representative body. It is about greater flexibility and the right of police and prison managers to manage and, as necessary, to subject service providers to fair external scrutiny and competition. Successive studies by the Audit Commission, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and the Prisons Service attest to the need for change, inside police stations, in the mess halls of prisons. The Police Federation must accept that its members' job is assuring the public of their safety. That depends on trust, which in turn requires an end—as the Home Secretary proposes—to freemasonry and stonewalling when inquiries are mounted. Jack Straw this week faces the unions' cootumely. He should face it down, and carry on.

Nothing to declare but their greed

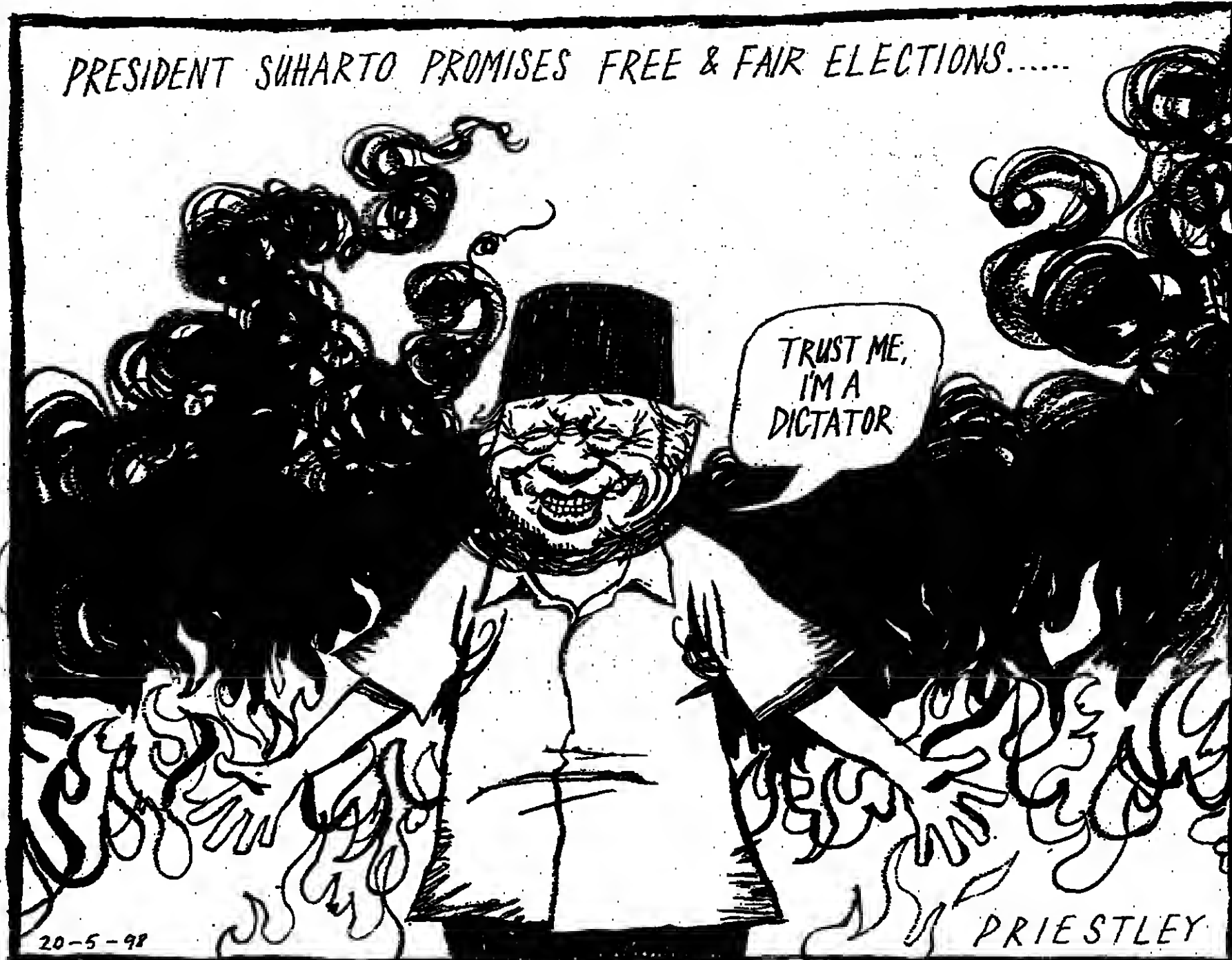
AT YESTERDAY'S meeting of EU finance ministers, the representatives of four of our European partners tried, rather clumsily, to prevent the abolition of duty-free sales for travellers between European countries, due to happen on 1 July 1999. The finance ministers of Germany, France, the Irish Republic and Spain behaved like some obviously shifty travellers trying to smuggle a few extra bottles of booze through the "nothing to declare" channel. But their try-on was over going to succeed and Gordon Brown, chairing the meeting, was quite right to dismiss their special pleadings.

The duty-free lobby has made the most extreme predictions about the imminent loss of jobs, industries, even whole airports as a result of the change. The alarms are a little synthetic. It is not as if the proposal to abolish duty-free has come out of a clear blue sky. The original decision was taken as long ago as 1991. The delay in implementation until next year was specifically designed to allow those who were going to be adversely affected ample time to prepare for what was coming. It is hard to believe that the regional airports, distillers, retailers and the rest have not been doing some quiet, careful planning to minimise the impact of the removal of their market distortion.

But even if some of the grim predictions of economic disruption were correct it would still be right to make the change. To maintain a special regime of tax-free sales purely for travellers moving between EU countries cannot be justified in an era of free movement for trade, goods and people between 15 countries. Duty-free allowances have been an anachronism since the Single Market was established in 1992. But the intrepid bargain-hunter should remember that rates of duty will still vary from country to country, and opportunities to shop around for cheap beer or tobacco will remain. Most of all, those in the duty-free lobby should be assured that old habits die hard and there will always remain a constituency for whom no holiday is complete without some heavy shopping whilst in transit.

Grow up, lads

WHAT is it about the Army and sex? To the tradition of bonking majors and cowering colonels is now added allegations of a groping chaplain. Amid a welter of salacious detail a court martial was told yesterday that the accused padre was regarded as "one of the lads" rather than as a "godly" character. If so it would be sadly apt. There is still something unpalatably adolescent about the Army culture—from the hokey atmosphere of the officers' mess to the loutish drinking and collective whoring of the squaddies. In all this, sex is seen as a predatory activity and the victims are innocent passers-by or the Army wives for whom divorce rates are so high. Perhaps our soldiers will not really change until the Army admits more women, and—dare we say it?—a few gays.



Unionists no bigots

Sir: I would like to draw attention to one aspect of the recent manoeuvrings over the Stormont agreement which has not received the analysis it has merited: the decision to counter the gaffe of the release of the Balcombe Street bombers by releasing Michael Stone, who murdered six Catholics and injured dozens more in a grenade attack.

This demonstrates more clearly than any other single act I can recall the complete misreading by the Northern Ireland Office of the thinking of the average Ulster Unionist. The mandarins are so sure that Unionism is at heart no more than a rationally inept rationalisation of bigotry that all that was required was to keep the blood count "sectarianly stable". That the sight of another thug flaunting his imminent immunity from the law should be used as a strategy for soothing the breasts of those concerned with the maintenance of law and order defies all logic, or rather reveals total cynicism.

The wavering Unionists cannot mean what they say: they are, by Northern Ireland Office definition, Catholic-haters and so must, despite their protestations, be pleased to see "one of theirs" in triumphalist mode. The average Unionist does not identify with loyalist paramilitaries. Can the same be said of his, by Northern Ireland Office definition, moderate nationalist counterparts? While the moderate nationalist seems to be content to be repelled by terrorism, the moderate Unionist sees law and order as the only bulwark against the Province-wide spread of the anarchy which terrorist appeasement has created in the Maze prison. If there were signs that the Irish government and the SDLP could take an equally non-sectarian view, that, rather than this Faustian pact, would create a sense of togetherness and co-operation among moderates which is the true basis for agreement on this island.

ROY BLAIR
Larne, Co Antrim

Sir: Given the particular significance of the Crown in the affairs of Northern Ireland, a voice from that quarter seems conspicuously lacking at this critical time. It was not always so. On 22 June 1921, King George V opened the new Ulster Parliament at Stormont. Rejecting the hard-line tendency of the official address provided, the King chose instead to express himself in language intended to appeal to the whole of the Irish people. He spoke, he said, "from the heart".

"I pray that my coming to Ireland today may prove to be the first step towards an end of strife amongst her peoples, whatever their race or creed. In that hope I appeal to all Irishmen to pause, to stretch out the hand of forbearance and conciliation, to forgive and forget and to join in making for the land which they love a new era of peace, contentment and goodwill."

The King's speech had an immediate political effect. When, the following day, Prime Minister Lloyd George unexpectedly offered de Valera a conference between the British government and representatives of northern and southern Ireland it was done, he said, "in the spirit of the King's words". A J P Taylor considered that George V had performed the greatest service by a British monarch in modern times.

PATRICIA MEEHAN
London SW9

Rights of the churches

Sir: Your rather cheap jibe "Rights are sacred—except in church" (leading article, 18 May) demonstrates a failure to understand the difficulty of protecting supposedly inalienable rights. Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights affirms the right of everyone to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. It makes no sense to protect those rights for individuals but not for groups of individuals—in this instance, the churches.

LETTERS

Post letters to Letters to the Editor and include a daytime telephone number
Fax 0171 293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

All the churches have sought in relation to the Human Rights Bill is the freedom to act consistently with our historic beliefs. Those who do not share these are free not to do so. We like the European Convention very well so long as it applies to us all and not just to those who share your prejudices.

MARTYN EDEN
Public Affairs Director
Evangelical Alliance
London SE11

Sir: I imagine you may be as fed up with unjust generalisations about "the media" as I (a Free Church minister) am with meanings about "the churches".

I fully endorse your objection to exemption from human rights legislation for the churches. Why should Christians have any problem with upholding human rights?

My ancestors in the Faith decided some centuries ago that in things that affect obedience to God, the Church (note the big C, which means the whole lot) is not subordinate to the state.

Nonetheless, where the state is doing its job of serving God's will of justice and peace for all humankind, we have no business either complaining or getting in the way. If, as I suspect, you are talking about the Church of England, rather than the Church as such, then they too should welcome pressure from government to put their ethical house in order, particularly as regards continued discrimination on ground of gender (still no women bishops), let alone sexuality.

The Rev DAVID J M COLEMAN
Film

We are the monsters

Sir: David Aaronovitch's article (16 May) on the extinct Ediacaran way of life was spot on, both as a

description for the lay readers, and for the high sense of humour and insight by which he made links to how we view ourselves biologically and ideologically.

There is, indeed, a school of thought developing that life could have taken many different turns from its inception, and that there is nothing "natural" about the forms of biology as we have them today and their "natural" selective history. This sometimes comes as a blow, even to professional biologists, weaned as they are on the selfish-gene vulgarism of Richard Dawkins and his relentless inner drive towards mean and lean life-forms. We are all monsters now.

GABRIEL A DOVER
Professor of Genetics
University of Leicester

Real nappies

Sir: The nappy debate (Letters, 2, 6, 9, 15 May) has failed to mention a "third way": a nappy laundering service.

We have been using one since the birth of our daughter last September and have found it convenient and reliable. Obviously, it costs money to have dirty nappies taken away and a bag of clean ones left on our doorstep. The cost, however, is comparable to that of disposable nappies and I feel it is worth it to reduce the refuse sent to landfill.

GRAHAM MULLIER
Bracknell, Berkshire

Sad sight

Sir: It was alarming to read that "Viagra, the new drug for impotence, can cause damage to eyesight for those who overuse it" (report, 14 May). Surely, the answer is to use it only until you need glasses.

JOHN HOLROYD
Thornhill, Dumfries

Our tanks in Jakarta

Sir: I was interested to see (18 May) a photograph of "armoured personnel carriers" in Jakarta. They are in fact Scorpion light tanks, made in Britain; according to *The Military Balance*, Indonesia has 50 of them and they were supplied while the Conservative Party was in power.

We were told on many occasions by various Conservative ministers that the arms being sold to Indonesia would not be used for "internal security" and yet on the TV news over the past few days we have seen many shots of these tanks in action against rioters.

No wonder Michael Howard is making as much fuss as he can about possible sales of arms to Sierra Leone—he and the government of which he was a member have very dirty hands and presumably wish at this moment to direct attention from what they did.

Colonel MICHAEL WRIGHT
Oxford

Sir: As High Commissioner in Free-town, Derek Partridge was widely regarded as a great friend of the people of Sierra Leone. He is surely right (letter, 14 May) to call for us to celebrate the return of democracy rather than listen to those in the British media and Opposition who were the first to shout "Rejoice" when armed invasion was overcome in the Falklands but now cry foul.

The British media will eventually tire of the story, and will find other means of continuing their campaign against Robin Cook. Democracy however remains a fragile plant in Sierra Leone and the country's diamonds a powerful incentive to those who seek to undermine it.

The British government might be forgiven for never wanting to hear of Sierra Leone again. An ethical foreign policy, however, demands that we now take a lead in helping to rebuild this war-torn country, and be prepared to act out to protect the freedom of its people.

RICHARD STOWELL
Bath
The writer was VSO Field Director in Sierra Leone 1989-92



MILES KINGDON

From Max Rothstein Esq

Sir: In all the homage paid to the late Frank Sinatra, I am sorry that nobody has paid tribute to his abiding love of the English game of cricket.

I used to play second alto saxophone in the touring band led by Harry James during the days of World War Two. As we went everywhere by coach we had to devise our own amusements, and among other things we used to stop in the country now and again to play baseball or throw a ball around. If we met another band coming the other way, we would maybe stop and play them at baseball.

Well, here comes this skinny little kid from Hoboken to sing with the band and if that ain't enough, he teaches us to play the English game of cricket, which he picked up from some limey movie or other. He always has to be different, Frankie. To humour him, and because it ain't a bad game, we learn. It was always Frank's sadness that none of the other bands could give us a

game, until once by sheer chance we encountered a travelling British symphony orchestra, somewhere on the road to Cincinnati. We amazed them by challenging them to cricket. We amazed them even more by beating them! But how we did that is another story.

Yours etc

From Cedric Price

Sir: I can vouch for the truth of the above. I was a British actor in Hollywood in the 1950s and Sinatra was desperate to join our expat cricket team. "Strictly for UK citizens, old boy," we told him. "Sorry and all that. It's our rules."

"Then that means only one thing," said Sinatra.

"That you're going to become a British subject?" we gasped. "Just in get a game of cricket?"

"Nah," he said. "It means you're going to change the rules."

The next day some Italian gentleman came to see our president, and after a short, terse meeting during which some furniture seemed to get badly broken, he announced that the rules would be changed. Sinatra joined our cricket club after all.

Yours etc

From Sir Frederick Snell

Sir: I can vouch for the truth of the above. I spent a short period in Hollywood in the 1950s as a film studio conductor and sometimes played in the same team as Sinatra. He was not an unfriendly man, but I fear he may have been abnormally shy, as he would never take the field except in the company of a friend, normally a large Italian man in sunglasses, coat and a hat. To begin with, these Italians found it hard to get used to the game. I remember once the captain shouted at Sinatra to move round to gully. His Italian friend drew a gun, went over and said to the captain:

"Nobody talks that way to our boss", and he was about to lay him out when Sinatra intervened.

Yours etc

From Mr Joe Romano

Sir: One more crack out of you about Sinatra's Italian friends and this column gets damaged. OK? OK—talk some more about cricket, but nothing else.

Yours etc

From Mr Percy Fudge

Sir: As a one-time cricketing colleague of Mr Sinatra in Hollywood I sometimes noticed that when he caught the ball—and he was a good catch—he would flick it from hand to hand, then from behind his back over his head and finally catch it under his knee. When I asked him why he did it, he said: "After years of handling a microphone, that's the only way I can catch anything."

Yours etc

From Max Rothstein

Sir: Me again. I forgot to tell you that I always remembered exactly where I was when I heard Kennedy was assassinated. I was standing next to Frank Sinatra in the slips playing in a Harry James Band reunion match, and word came out that the President had been killed. We were all stunned—except Frank, who just sort of muttered: "He had it coming. He should have played ball."

"Kennedy should have played cricket, if you mean, Frank?" I said. "Never mind what I mean," he said. "So I didn't. Nobody did, with his mean Italian friends all around..."

From Mr Joe Romano

Sir: OK, I warned you. No Italian references, I said. But you wouldn't listen. Well, that's it. No more column today. Everyone go home. Nice and easy. That's it. We're closing down. Right now...

The view from the sidelines – The United States v Microsoft



HAMISH
McRAE

I SUPPOSE I should start with a confession. I hate computers. I earn my living sitting in front of one, pecking away at the keyboard as I am doing now, and we have the Internet at home. But the actual technology seems to me to be at best boring, and at worst profoundly frustrating. Computers take ages to fire up, periodically crash, and use cute California-speak like "cookies" and "browsers" to describe things you don't understand, or slither into spoof legalise as in "this program has performed an illegal operation and will be shut down".

So it was with a certain weariness that I read about the anti-trust suit filed this week by the US Justice Department against Microsoft. Who cares which browser to use on the Internet? Surely when someone comes along with a better browser (or whatever) we will go and buy it. Boring, boring, boring.

But it isn't. It suddenly dawned on me that one of the main reasons why computers are so infuriating is that there isn't enough competition in the way they work. You can buy them from any number of manufacturers, all of whom try desperately to pretend that their products are different, but once you switch the things on they all behave in the same way. More than 90 per cent use Microsoft's Windows.

To say that is not to rail against Windows, as such. I'm sure it is perfectly OK at what it does, and the principal alternative, the Apple system, is irritating too. But it is a strange irony that the personal computer, the great individualistic, liberating force of the 1990s, should be so conformist in the way it works. Switch the thing on and instead of getting, say, a picture of a loved one or the FT share prices or even the maker's name, you get that Windows logo.

And that, ultimately, is why the suit against Microsoft matters. Computers have to be able to talk to each other, so there is a great convenience in their having a common language. Just as the business world has standardised on English, the computer world has standardised, first, on MS-Dos and then on Windows. But Windows is not owned by anyone, whereas Windows is, and the charge against Microsoft is that it uses its dominance of the computer language to force, or at least ouge, people to use its other products.

The specific issue the US Justice Department is examining is whether Windows leads people towards using Microsoft's Explorer browser for the Internet, instead of the main and earlier alternative, Netscape's Navigator. (For the uninitiated, you need a browser as a sort of entry point into the Internet – the front desk of the electronic library, where you register before you head off to look round the bookshelves.)

But the specific issue seems to me to be

less important than the general principle, which is whether dominance on one product should be used to push buyers towards another, maybe creating dominance there too. I happen to use Navigator but I have no idea whether it is better or worse than Explorer. But I do know that markets work better if there are two, three or more producers of goods or services than if there is only one. Our own history of nationalised industries and privatised monopolies bears this out.

Nationalised industries were a lost cause, a form of commercial organisation which simply did not work; but we are still learning how to regulate privatised monopolies, and I suppose the US anti-trust action should be seen as a first step towards a form of regulation for information technology monopolies. Microsoft has a global monopoly rather than just a US one, but the rest of us have to rely on the US anti-trust action to act in the interest of consumers outside the US.

Relying on the US courts to act in the best interest of global consumers is a pretty unsatisfactory state of affairs. The rest of the world has to cope not just with a Microsoft monopoly, but with a United States monopoly too. This is not so bad for other Anglophone nations, but the non-English-speaking world sees itself sidelined. What is really needed is not just a counterbalance to Microsoft but a counterbalance to the US dominance of the personal computer world. How can such a counterbalance be created?

I can see two ways in which it might. The first is that somewhere out there, there exists a series of technical advances that will reduce the power of the single operating system for computers. Computers will become capable of operating simultaneously on lots of different systems. How precisely this will happen I don't know: as I said, I hate computers.

But it is not hard to see conceptually how it might develop. Take a computer which only speaks one language. Now download on it,

Somewhere out there are
people with ideas which
will chip away at Windows

not only a program in another language but also a dictionary that enables it to decipher the new programme. (For people who are interested in this, Java mini-programs are, I suppose, a prototype of this sort of development.) The second way in which a counterbalance might develop will be when Microsoft implodes. It is a company that consists only of the intellectual capital of the people it employs, plus some licences. The glue that holds all this together is the personality of one man, Bill Gates. When he goes, gets bored, comes off the boil, wants to spend more time with his family or whatever, the company will fall apart. Companies where the capital is intellectual are much more fragile than companies that own physical capital.

So see the US Justice Department's action as a temporary patch, a necessary attempt to regulate a monopoly. But remember that all monopolies die in the end. Somewhere out there – perhaps in some university lab, more likely in some garage or garden shed – there are people with the ideas which will chip away at the world of Windows. Nothing is forever.

We can't afford confusion at the heart of the childcare revolution



SUZANNE
MOORE

IN AN ideal world childcare would be a sizzling issue. We would eagerly await pronouncements from on high about the new National Childcare Strategy. We would debate the new Green Paper in pubs all over the land. We would imagine a brave new world in which the majority of women worked and therefore the majority of children were looked after by people who were not related to them and we might realise that this is not in fact the future, it's the way we live now.

In the real world however childcare is regarded as a boring women's issue, even though it is one that is central to New Labour, New Deal politicians. People who have never spent one week in sole charge of their own children debate childcare at an entirely abstract level.

Children are our future, they repeatedly intone. We will reap the long-term benefits of good quality childcare. Meanwhile most working mothers organise a patchwork of childcare arrangements, some formal, much of it informal involving relatives and friends. Those who can afford it, fret about the quality of childcare that they are purchasing; those who cannot, feel that they have no choice whatsoever in the matter.

Yet, these two words, "quality" and "choice", are part of the New Labour mantra and are used over and over again in the new green paper *Meeting the Childcare Challenge*. Of course this is right. Quality and choice are not concepts that anyone should argue with. The question remains: how is all this to be done.

Childcare, as Harriet Harman points out, is as important as economic policy. "It is part of the infrastructure that enables women to work." Actually a national strategy on childcare is economic policy. The economy needs more women in the workplace to stop it stagnating.

We are already halfway there. We have 62 per cent of mothers in paid work, and 51 per cent of those will have children



Paradoxically, people who work with children are praised, trusted and underpaid

Photograph: Nicola Kurtz

under five. Clearly this government has decided to build on the arrangements that most women already have in place rather than radically re-vamp them. Childcare is essentially, even when no money changes hands, a privatised business with individuals making their own, often ingenious, arrangements.

As someone who for years relied on a network of friends and neighbours, I am amazed that most women manage as well as they do. I say "most women", not to be nasty to men (God forbid), but because even when men do look after children the responsibility for organising childcare still falls to women.

Indeed the recent EU summit in Belfast of European Ministers for Women concluded that there must be further conferences to find out how to get men more involved in childcare, which is still regarded even in Scandinavian countries as a chore rather than a pleasure. Everyone who has done it knows surely that it is both.

Our national childcare strategy doesn't address such fundamental cultural difficulties. Although it does accept that the extended family has broken down and consequently women find themselves less and less able to rely on grandparents. *Meeting the Childcare Challenge* takes it for granted that most women with children want and need to get jobs. Childcare has become important not because of female demands – remember

one of the early and laughable demands of the Women's Liberation Movement was 24-hour crèches – but because of economic necessity.

We now need a coherent national policy and the one delivered by Harman promises a childcare audit to find out what is available; a new childcare tax credit; 50,000 more childcare places; £170m of lottery money to fund new out-of-school centres; as well as a free "education" place for every four-year-old by September this year; and £20m to help train childcare workers.

Where are the
new childcare
workers going
to come from?

This is good news. Whether however this will make us a more child-friendly country is open to discussion. There appears to be a contradiction at the heart of this government's attitude to childcare. On one hand, we all need it in order to work, work being the New Labour salvation, yet those whose work is looking after children will continue to be amongst the lowest-paid in the country. Those who are thinking of going into the childcare

business must rely only on the promise of a minimum wage.

Where exactly are the new childcare workers going to come from? Well, there are a load of lone mothers out there who are desperate to get back to work. As soon as they can find cheap enough childcare for their own children they can take jobs looking after other people's. The Catch 22 of women on low wages paying other women even lower wages will continue. Childminders know that they cannot price themselves out of the market and the market will dictate that childcare remains a thoroughly low-paid and under-valued female occupation.

Doubtless, the middle classes will be impressed by this government's commitment to the regulation of child-minders and nannies. Not an Islington evening goes by without a mini-moral panic about the latest domestic crisis. We now live with a huge service/personal services class.

Far worse than the prospect of an abused child is the spectre that haunts working parents; the under-stimulated child, the child who watches TV instead of being educated with plastic shapes. Such people pay their cleaners more than their child-minders but expect those responsible for their children to behave as play therapists, preschool teachers and cooks all at the same time.

There is some confusion at

the heart of government debate about what childcare means. Childcare is used in times to mean simply baby-sitting, at others to mean parenting and then again to mean education. After-school clubs are set up not only to prevent the phenomenon of latchkey kids but to encourage them to do their homework.

The distinction between simply looking after children and educating them is being blurred. If from September this year every four-year-old is guaranteed a place in education, then effectively we are talking about our kids starting school at the age of four rather than five, which is very early compared to our European counterparts.

All of this amounts to a sea-change in our attitude to women and work, one that is being recognised by the Government. The old anxieties about the effects on children of having working mothers have been swept aside, even by those who elsewhere talk of family values. It is simply assumed that childcare has become a parental right rather than a parental option – and this is truly radical. Access to childcare changes individual women's lives; collectively, this will change all our lives.

What is going on in playrooms and nurseries may not appear sexy but it should be. This is the revolution in our midst and one day we will look back and wonder what mothers did in the days before they went to work.

Ireland, too, is divided over how to vote in Friday's referendum



RUTH
PADEL

NEWBLISS lies eight miles south of the border with Northern Ireland. It was settled in the 17th century by Murray Ker, a Protestant Scot from rocky Lanarkshire.

Why Newbliss? "When they saw these rolling fields they

thought they'd walked into their own hymns," a Scottish researcher once told me.

Historically and topographically these counties, Cavan and Monaghan, belong to Ulster. Demographically, they are a mix very similar to Fermanagh and Armagh – but a peaceful one. In The Black Kesh pub, I've heard both national anthems played at the end of a Saturday night. The garage where you buy drink takes English and Irish money.

In 1922, these counties were excluded from Northern Ireland by a line drawn by the Boundary Commission. Everyone here knows that if the ink had flowed another way, there'd be villages in these shallow quiet valleys where every house would have lost

someone – just like twenty miles away, in exactly similar valleys.

Helicopters would shadow the glossy Friesians, who gaze at you down every lane; fluffy Aikens would pop from the hedges beside British boys with rifles. These are some of the day-to-day external tokens of things you hope might stop over the border – if there's a "Yes" on Friday in the referendum.

But "Yes" feels a long way off. Ingrid Adams, whose husband Gerry Adams plays accordion in the Band of Drum Orange Lodge – the only place in the Republic where Ian Paisley has a church – isn't sure how she'll vote. Like many, she's confused by the Republic's Amsterdam Treaty referendum, also happening on Friday.

"It's bad enough being asked to make up your mind on one question, let alone two."

Ingrid works at the Tyrone Guthrie Centre, set up 20 years ago on the border in the midst of the Troubles. It gets money from both Arts Councils, Northern Ireland and the Republic. Artists, writers and composers from both sides come and work here.

The house was left to the Republic by the Protestant theatre magnate Tyrone Guthrie, who died in 1971 after outraging everyone as Chancellor of Queen's University, Belfast, when he told matriculating students of 1969 that, as the educated elite, they should ignore "that senseless border down the road". The centre keeps Guthrie's tradition of equal

employment for Protestant and Catholic. "My own wish," said the Belfast-born Director Bernard Loughlin, "is for the reintegration of Ulster's nine counties within a federal Ireland where the decency and respect I see here could prevail in a new Beneluxembourg of the North."

Every emotional and technical issue for Friday is a crown of thorns: like the TV theatricals over released prisoners. I've heard the clause which amends Articles 2 and 3 in the Republic's constitution attacked from both sides. "It means giving up our claim on the North! It's legalising partition!" said the Dublin-born Deirdre, marching a Nationalist "No" vote. "It means a foreign state has territorial interests in my country," said John Hunter

from Antrim. "It's the first step to a united Ireland."

"I must look at the leaflets," said Ingrid. "Some people are saying, 'Don't vote at all. If we don't vote yes', we'll be sitting here with no change. But – well, I don't know how I'll vote."

Newbliss has old lamp-posts. "Peace Process money," says Eddie, driving me from the bus. And there are new pavements, also laid with money from the Special European Programme for Peace and Reconciliation that has brought millions into these border counties already. So here's one tangible result.

Maybe "Yes" won't mean new bliss, exactly, even here. But new light – or a new footing, equally under everyone's shoes – seems a handy little omen.

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Make it bloom

THOSE old roots grow deep in the *Daily Express* garden, according to Pandora's sources. As the paper's editor, Rosie Roycott, and her deputy, Chris Blackhurst, labour to re-landscape the tabloid, they continually find new outbreaks of stubborn, politically incorrect attitudes.

In his wanderings through the sub-editors' patch, Blackhurst just managed to prune one offensive headline – "Two Wongs Don't Make A White" – before it went to press. Later he came across a veteran *Express* sub using the word "pervert" in relation to homosexuality. Gently, Blackhurst nipped this in the bud, explaining that "pervert" was not a word that would sit comfortably in the new green *Express* beds. "But," protested the old sub, "the guy is a pervert."

Fashion victim?

IS STELLA McCARTNEY in danger of letting her idealism damage her career as a fashion designer? Apparently Stella has done the narration for an anti-fur protest video that is being sent out to leaders of the New York fashion industry this week.

The video has been produced by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals.

However, Anna Wintour, the powerful editor of *American Vogue*, is not just staunchly pro-fur but the victim of anti-fur terrorists who covered her in red fluid outside a glittering Gotham reception last year. Pandora salutes Sir Paul's daughter for the courage of her convictions, and trusts Wintour will continue to feature Stella's frocks in her mag.

PANDORA

Kiwi dons

WHERE are men's swimming briefs called "hippies"? And an "egg shell blonde" what you call a bald man? Where else but in the Oxford University Press *Dictionary of New Zealand English*. With tones like this being produced in Great Clarendon Street, Pandora can understand why recent reports give Cambridge a clear lead over Oxford in the scholarship rankings.

Defence threat

NOT all Labour backbenchers have succumbed to the iron bleeder dis-

cipline of 10 Downing Street. Witness Bruce George, MP for Walsall South and chairman of the Select Committee on Defence, who is very cross about the delays to the Government's Strategic Defence Review. Due to go before his committee at the end of June, the review, it now appears, will not be available until the middle of July.

This would give George and his colleagues only two weeks to tackle a document he believes merits far more consideration. Hence George is threatening to hold 12 hearings to cross-examine ministers during the months of August and September while the House is in adjournment. How will George Robertson, Secretary of State for Defence, defend himself against this threat to his hole? Pandora expects to hear the Defence Review will be ready in a flash.

Mr Moneyppenny?

THE actor Rupert Everett, who starred opposite Julia Roberts in *My Best Friend's Wedding* will be speaking frankly about his homosexuality on American television tonight. He tells the lisping TV harpie Barbara Walters that "I figure that it's better to tell them ... you're not forced to be in a defensive position when they find out about it."

Pandora couldn't agree more, although perhaps a bit more reticence would have been wise before Rupert described his dream film project. He wants to play a gay James Bond and has already written the script. Although the traditional glamorous Bond girls would appear, says Rupert, "I end up with Dennis Rodman." Shaken or stirred, this sounds like a rather potent recipe for box-office disaster.

Nomura left standing as Nikko makes a meal of Roadchef

By Peter Thal Larsen

GUY HANDS, the Nomura executive behind some of the City's most audacious deals of recent years, has been beaten at his own game by a former protégé who now works for a rival bank.

Keith Howard, who was part of Hands's team until last summer, when he moved to Nikko, the Japanese finance house, yesterday won the bidding war for Roadchef, the motorway services group.

Nikko bid £175m for the business, including £35m of debt. The offer values the

63-per-cent stake held by Tim Ingram-Hill, Roadchef's chairman and chief executive, at £88m. Nikko's late bid, which was negotiated over the weekend and signed on Monday, trumped an earlier offer from Nomura. The Japanese group is understood to have thought it was negotiating exclusively with Roadchef, and had also been hoping to sign the deal on Monday.

Industry sources said Nomura reduced its offer by £10m to £169m after an environmental report showed that petrol from two of Roadchef's service stations was leaking into the water table. The bank is also

believed to have been concerned by some of Roadchef's accounting policies.

But Nikko denied the suggestion that Roadchef's environmental standards were not up to scratch. "I can categorically say that's not true," Mr Howard said, adding that Nikko's own environmental report gave Roadchef "a clean bill of health". Asked about his rivalry with his former boss, Mr Howard said: "There's nothing wrong with a bit of good friendly competition."

An adviser to Roadchef said Mr Hands was upset at not winning the battle. "No-

mura thought they had won it but they screwed up. They were complacent in the way they handled the deal. Now Guy is trying to use the press to get his own back."

Mr Hands has been one of the most successful deal-makers of recent years, masterminding acquisitions which, among others, turned Nomura into the country's largest pub landlord. Using cheap debt backed by the bank's sound credit rating, he was able to outbid industry buyers for assets such as Intreprenuer, the pub estate owned by Bass and Fosters, and William Hill, the chain of bookmakers. The

deal represents a fantastic return for Roadchef's management team, many of whom have been with the company since it was formed through a management buy-out in 1983.

Mr Ingram-Hill, 48, joined the business as personnel director in 1979 and rose to become chief executive in 1988. He is credited with turning it into the country's third-largest motorway service station group, operating from 12 sites.

Mr Ingram-Hill and his fellow directors will continue to run the company after the takeover, and will trade in some of their

shareholding for shares in the new company. Mr Howard said that Nikko was intending to invest for the long term, and would give Roadchef's management the financial support they needed to expand the business.

Service stations have proved popular with financial buyers in recent years. In-vestcorp, the Bahrain-based investment group, last year shocked the City with its winning £376m bid for Welcome Break, the motorway service business which Gram-da was forced to sell following its takeover of Forte, the hotel group.

Directors at M&S contradict Greenbury on date for retirement

By Nigel Cope
Associate City Editor

MARKS & SPENCER was at the centre of a potentially damaging controversy over its succession plans for its chairman Sir Richard Greenbury yesterday when directors gave conflicting versions of events. The storm blew up after Sir Richard said he had been asked by the board to stay on as chairman until he is 65, another four years. However, this statement was contradicted later when another M&S director said the board had not yet reached a decision.

Analysts said that the apparent split could indicate that Sir Richard did not have the unanimous backing of the board. In response to questions on the issue, a clearly angry Sir Richard said: "I'm retiring at 65 just as my predecessors Lord Rayner and Lord Sieff did. That is generally the retirement age of M&S chairmen and I would greatly appreciate it if you would stop conjecturing about it. No one speculated about who was going to replace Sir Ian MacLaurio at Tesco four

years before he retired."

He added later: "What with all the expansion plans we have at the moment the board asked me to stay on though I had been in favour of going a bit sooner."

After studying board minutes, an M&S spokesman said the decision for Sir Richard to stay on had been unanimous at a recent strategy review meeting. "The board voted the chairman's willingness to serve until he is 65 and the board then asked him to stay on," he said. The spokesman added: "We probably haven't handled the issue that well."

Sir Richard, who became chairman in 1991, said it was possible that he would split the roles of chairman and chief executive, which would bring the company into line with best practice as suggested by the Cadbury committee. "Seven of the top 20 companies in this country combine the roles so I'm not unique," said Sir Richard. The possibility of separating the roles had been discussed but was "not part of current planning".

City analysts said a move by Sir Richard to co-opt executive chairman would be welcomed. "In this age of Cadbury, com-



Sir Richard Greenbury, 61, above, said that he had been asked to stay until he was 65. However other directors said that the board had not reached a decision on the issue.

bing both roles is difficult to justify," one analyst said. "He is his own worst enemy at times because he has this 'chip on the shoulder' attitude towards the City. It might be a good idea to have someone with a smoother style."

"It is a shame because he is a great merchant and there is nothing wrong with his strategy of expanding both in the UK and abroad while going into home shopping."

The debate over who might succeed Sir Richard was fuelled two months ago when Lord Stone, who has presided over

the growth of the company's clothing operations, was moved to take over its food operations. Analysts say he now looks to be ahead of other candidates such as Keith Oates, the former favourite, Peter Salsbury and Andrew McCracken.

The questions over the boardroom structure came as Marks & Spencer reported a 6 per cent increase in full-year profits to £1.17bn and said the fruits of its aggressive £2.2bn expansion plan would come until the turn of the century. The company even hinted that profits might fall in the current

year, which would be the first time in living memory.

"We have a year in which we have to take a step back in order to take a gigantic leap forward," Sir Richard said.

Costs rose faster than group sales which rose by 5 per cent to £8.4bn. Profits were hit by the strength of sterling and the Far Eastern turmoil which caused overseas profits to fall by £23m.

M&S staff have been given a 4 per cent pay rise plus further performance benefits as part of an £80m package.

The shares fell 4p to 576p. Outlook, page 23

Sainsbury denies plans to quit US

By Nigel Cope
Associate City Editor

SAINSBURY yesterday sold its 20 per cent stake in Giant Food, the Washington-based supermarket group, for £600m, but denied that the move signalled a complete withdrawal from the US market. The stake, acquired in two parts over the past three and a half years, is being sold to Royal Ahold, the Dutch supermarket group, for \$600m (£375m), representing a £100m profit.

Sainsbury said the decision did not mean that it would sell its Shaw's business on the east coast of America. It also denied that the impending retirement of Lord Sainsbury, the group's chairman, who has been a keen exponent of the expansion of Sainsbury in the US, might lead to a change in strategy. "David was party to the discussions," a spokesman said.

Dino Adriano, Sainsbury's chief executive, added: "Taking control of Giant was a desirable but not essential element of our US growth strategy. We believe that Sainsbury can add value in the US food retail sector and are focused on improving Shaw's performance."

Sainsbury's shares rose 24.5p to 515p on the news, as analysts took the view that a complete withdrawal from America was now more likely.

"The UK investment community would prefer Sainsbury to be out of the US," said Philip Dorgan at Panmure Gordon. Other analysts asked whether some of the proceeds might be returned to shareholders. Sainsbury said it would invest the cash in the business.

Shaw's operating profits fell 5.2 per cent to \$61.8m last year, due to a strike that affected first-half earnings and losses at stores in Connecticut.

McCullagh resigns as Biotech head

By Terry Macalister

KEITH MCCULLAGH, the chief executive of British Biotech who has been at the centre of a storm over share dealings and corporate strategy, announced his resignation yesterday.

He believed it was best to "settle any uncertainty" and to "end the debate" by leaving the company in September that he had formed 12 years ago.

The move came as British Biotech tried to regain the support of shareholders by issuing a 30-page rebuttal of damaging allegations by the former head of research, Andrew Millar.

The company's share price fell a further 3p to 59p but there were signs last night that the salvage mission was succeeding. Influential shareholder Perpetual, which has been highly critical of British Biotech management, said it was "relatively satisfied" that outstanding issues were being addressed.

British Biotech said in the circular that it had already won the support of Mercury Asset Management which is the biggest single shareholder in the company.

Dr Millar had claimed in the past that investors were being misled by over-optimistic forecasts about the drug stream. He was sacked for making his views known to shareholders behind the board's back.

Dr Millar, talking from his home in Oxfordshire yesterday said it was "a bit of a relief" to hear that Dr McCullagh was going. But he added: "That should only be the first step in a corporate change of direction."

He had called for cutbacks and his wishes were granted yesterday. The company unveiled plans to reduce spending by making 42 staff redundant, amalgamating offices and developing a corporate alliance in the United States. But company officials said that the annual cash burn would remain at around £50m to £60m, meaning that it would run out of money within three years if new cash was not forthcoming.

Dr McCullagh insisted that all these plans had been in place - but not made public - at the beginning of the year. They were not introduced in response to Dr Millar's criticism, Dr McCullagh insisted.

At a special press briefing, a shaken-looking board led by Dr McCullagh and the chairman, John Raisman, received tough questioning but in turn attacked Dr Millar for damaging the company.

The board members said a decision to sue Dr Millar for unfounded allegations was under review and accused him of endangering two clinical trials.

They believed he was partly motivated by the fact he had wanted a job which had subsequently gone to an outsider, Dr Peder Jensen, who was at the conference yesterday.

Dr Jensen, a board member and development director, said Dr Millar had acted "improperly" in peeking at the results of two studies into various uses of Maimstat and Zalcitabine, the company's two main drugs.

Dr Jensen, who has been with the company for only three months, warned that "blind" trials could be deemed invalid by regulatory authorities and therefore could be delayed in coming on to the market, "in a worse-case scenario".

But Dr Jensen backed up one of Dr Millar's complaints by saying it would help if there were more people on the board with relevant experience.

On the central allegations of wrongful share dealings, a poor product pipeline and bad corporate strategy, the circular to shareholders said: "The board considers these allegations to be unfounded... The board is convinced the company has real substance and a worthwhile future."

It also said that it was "fully satisfied" that Dr McCullagh had acted honourably throughout his 12 years at the helm of British Biotech. Mr Raisman said he would be taking steps to find a replacement by looking at both internal and external candidates.

Boh Yerbury, chief investment officer at Perpetual, which holds 9 per cent of British Biotech stock, said the decision by Dr McCullagh to leave was inevitable.

"I think his position had become very difficult inside and outside the company," said Mr Yerbury.

British Biotech's circular finally confirmed that the company is under Stock Exchange investigation but insists elsewhere that the board is satisfied that there is no substance to allegations that certain of the then directors of the company dealt in shares when they should not have done.

Keith McCullagh: Will step down in September



Tony Buckingham poised to float Heritage exploration company

By Andrew Verity

TONY BUCKINGHAM, the oil and diamond entrepreneur with business links to Sandline International, is seeking a public listing for his exploration company Heritage Oil & Gas.

Business associates yesterday said he was seeking a listing on the Toronto stock exchange. It was said Heritage would be valued at "hundreds of millions of pounds". Mr Buckingham is a figure in a network of oil and mineral companies which includes Sandline International, the military-advice company being investigated by Customs and Excise as

part of the "arms to Africa" affair. He owns a 98-per-cent stake in Heritage, which shares an office in King's Road, Chelsea, with Sandline.

If he successfully floated Heritage, Mr Buckingham would be presorted with unprecedented opportunities to raise capital and expand his exploration interests in Africa and the Middle East. Confirmation of the plan to list came from John Teeling, chairman of Petrel Resources, a £3.5m oil-exploration company quoted on Ofex, the lightly regulated share market. "He is going to float Heritage. That's a certainty," Dr Teeling said.

GEC investors are guaranteed shares in £4bn Alstom float

By Michael Harrison

SHAREHOLDERS in GEC will be guaranteed £1,000 worth of shares each in next month's £4bn flotation of GEC Alstom, the jointly owned power engineering and rail group.

GEC and Alcatel of France are jointly floating a majority stake in the company. The preferential allocation of shares means that up to 6 per cent of the newly quoted company, to be called Alstom, could be in the hands of GEC or Alcatel shareholders.

The minimum subscription for GEC's 120,000 shareholders

will be about £500. The offer will not be open to the general public in either the UK or France.

In a letter posted to shareholders this week, Lord Simpson, GEC's managing director, said that a prospectus would be published in early June providing more details about how to apply for shares.

GEC and Alcatel intend to sell a combined stake in the business of between 52 and 58 per cent. The have also made arrangements to extract an £80m special dividend from Alstom, paid for out of its cash mountain of £1.4bn.

In addition, GEC will raise more than £1bn from the sale

of a 24-28 per cent stake in Alstom. The company has not yet said how it plans to reward its shareholders following the float. Existing investors are in effect being invited to buy shares in a company they already own. Last year GEC carried out a £300m share buy-back and a further distribution to shareholders from the proceeds of the flotation must be on the cards.

Meanwhile it emerged that Germany's Daimler Benz Aerospace is seeking to link up with GEC and British Aerospace in a joint bid for parts of the US defence contractor Northrop Grumman.

Yesterday in the markets

STOCK MARKETS

Indices	Close	Change	Change (%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100	5877.80	51.60	0.88	6150.50	4382.80	3.58
FTSE 250	5785.20	2.70	0.05	5803.10	4384.20	2.80
FTSE 350	2857.10	20.40	0.72	2838.70	2141.80	3.44
FTSE All Share	2794.62	19.27	0.69	2861.12	2106.59	3.40
FTSE SmallCap	2780.50	9.00	0.33	2752.30	2182.10	2.50
FTSE MidCap	1486.50	8.50	0.58	1483.00	1225.20	3.08
FTSE AIM	1117.50	1.50	0.12	1118.00	985.90	1.07
FTSE EURO 100	1016.82					
Dow Jones	9108.22	55.56	0.61	9261.91	8971.32	1.56
Nikkei	15561.65	167.18	1.09	20510.79	14468.21	0.97
Hang Seng	9448.11	37.14	0.40	16820.31	7908.13	4.27
Dax	5588.90	46.05	0.83	5442.00	3497.24	1.52

INTEREST RATES

Short sterling					UK 10 year gilt					US long bond				
Rate	1 month	3 month	6 month	1 year	Rate	1 year	2 year	5 year	10 year	Rate	1 year	2 year	5 year	
UK	7.50	1.00	1.75	0.50	5.92	1.15	5.97	1.28		5.83	1.28	5.83	1.28	
US	5.70	0.14	0.91	0.35	5.65	1.05	5.83	0.99		5.83	1.05	5.83	1.05	
Japan	0.54	0.03	0.55	0.28	1.54	1.17	2.13	1.16						
Germany	3.63	0.47	3.94	0.82	4.98	0.78	5.55	0.98						

Money Market Rates					Bond Yields				
Rate	1 month	3 month	6 month	1 year	Rate	1 year	2 year	5 year	10 year
UK	7.50	1.00	1.75	0.50	5.92	1.15	5.97	1.28	
US	5.70	0.14	0.91	0.35	5.65	1.05	5.83	0.99	
Japan	0.54	0.03	0.55	0.28	1.54	1.17	2.13	1.16	
Germany	3.63	0.47	3.94	0.82	4.98	0.78	5.55	0.98	

MAIN PRICE CHANGES				
Prices	Price (p)	Change	% Change	Prices
Sainsbury	1515.50	34.50	2.34	BP
Next	921.00	34.00	3.80	BT
Gen Accident	1376.00	54.00	4.00	Lloyds
Alliance Unicom	475.00	22.50	4.75	Pratt & Whitney
Reckitt Benckiser	322.50	12.50	4.00	Manchester United

CURRENCIES

\$/£				DM/£				¥/£			
Rate	1 month	3 month	6 month	Rate	1 month	3 month	6 month	Rate	1 month	3 month	6 month
Dollar	1.6245	+0.005	1.6378	DM	0.8158	-0.029	0.8107	Yen	166.20	+0.02	166.20
DM	0.6158	-0.029	0.6107	Yen	166.20	+0.02	166.20	Base Rates	7.25	6.25	
Yen	166.20	+0.02	166.20	Base Rates	7.25	6.25					
Index	103.10	+0.00	99.20	\$ Index	111.10	+0.00	102.40				
OTHER INDICATORS											
at 5pm	Change	Yr Ago	at 5pm	Change	Yr Ago	at 5pm	Change	Yr Ago	at 5pm	Change	Yr Ago
Bank of US	14.82	-0.01	19.90	GDP	114.60	2.80	111.48	Jul			
Govt US	300.05	0.40	341.45	RPI	162.80	4.00	155.35	May			
Silver (p)	5.25	-0.17	4.98	Base Rates	7.25	6.25					

TOURIST RATES

Austral (A\$)		2.5075		Malta (M\$)		0.6178	
Austria (Schillings)	19.74	Mexico (Nuevo peso)	12.57				
Belgium (francs)	57.98	Netherlands (Gulden)	3.1682				
Canada (C\$)	2.2879	New Zealand (\$)	2.2874				
Cyprus (pounds)	0.8227	Norway (Krone)	11.89				
Denmark (Krone)	10.77	Portugal (Escudo)	205.81				
Finland (Markka)	6.8068	Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	5.9184				
France (francs)	9.4314	Singapore (S\$)	2.5487				
Germany (Mark)	2.8214	South Korea (Won)	238.34				
Greece (Drachmas)	485.50	South Africa (Rand)	7.9899				
Hong Kong (\$)	12.20	Sweden (Krone)	1.1146				
Ireland (Punt)	1.1146	Switzerland (Franc)	2.9498				
India (Rupees)	63.43	Thailand (Baht)	57.60				
Israel (Sheqel)	5.4970	Turkey (Lira)	39/7883				
Italy (Lira)	2782	USA (\$)	1.5882				
Japan (Yen)	216.00						
Malaysia (Ringgit)	5.9248						

Rates for indication purposes only
Source: Thomas Cook

ملف من الاموال



OUTLOOK ON A POSSIBLE NUCLEAR RENAISSANCE, THE PRESSURES OF AGE AND A FAILURE OF NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

Nuclear power could clean up this time

THE GOVERNMENT oozed the coal crisis, a classic confrontation between old and new Labour, like a hunk in the head. What it has now got, however, is the added complication of the nuclear industry throwing its twopennyworth into the debate about Britain's future energy needs.

Most of us thought we had seen the beginning of the end of the nuclear experiment in 1995, when the then Government decided it was an uneconomic proposition to fund it with any more taxpayers' money. British Energy appeared to confirm this in the countdown to privatisation by tearing up the planning permission it had for one new nuclear station and withdrawing its planning application for another. The spectre of the nuclear legacy had finally destroyed the argument for it as a fuel source. Game, set and match to the environmental lobby. Or so it seemed.

Now the nuclear industry has turned the environmental argument on its head. It has persuaded investors that decommissioning and fuel clean-up costs of £13bn are an acceptable risk. Furthermore, it has begun trying to persuade ministers that if they are to meet the greenhouse targets that Tony Blair signed up to in Kyoto, then more nuclear power is the only option.

The statistics come tumbling out. Had it not been for the nuclear industry, Britain would have pumped another 51 million tonnes of carbon dioxide into the ozone layer last year - the equivalent of half the greenhouse gases released by motor vehicles.

The nuclear lobby certainly deserves to be listened to. Up until now, the debate about Britain's future energy needs has

been characterised as a fight to the death between coal and gas. Allow the pits to wither away and in 20 years time we will be reliant upon imported Algerian and Russian gas for 90 per cent of our energy needs.

In fact nuclear could be a much more powerful bulwark against the dash for gas than coal. A new generation of pressurised water reactors would almost certainly mean higher electricity prices but it might also teach us to be more economical with the juice. As for the environment, one really knows whether the pay-as-you-go policy will be enough to cover the back-end costs when the nuclear stations reach the end of their lives. But what we do know is that right now, they are the clean men of the energy scene.

A messy business at Marks & Sparks

EVEN by his own standards, Sir Richard Greecorby, chairman of Marks & Spencer, was in a foul and cantankerous mood yesterday. The analysts were berated first. Then at the briefing for the press, the hacks got it full in the ock. What had really got his goat was that one of his in-troction to stay on as M&S chairman for another four years until the age of 65 had leaked. The problem was that he had leaked the story himself by writing to a journalist - apropos of something else - boasting that the board had asked him to stay. One's own mistakes are always the most irritating, are they not?

The important issue here, however, is

less the manner of the announcement as what it tells you about M&S more generally. Certainly the company has not handled the question of Sir Richard's succession terribly well and it may well be that the board is not acting in unison on this issue. Sir Richard says the board asked him to stay on. Others say so such decision has been reached.

There is talk of Sir Richard splitting the roles of chairman and chief executive, which in these days of Cadburyan correctness would be welcomed in the Square Mile. But even here there is no clear view among directors as to whether this would be the right approach. Messy successions do not impress the City, which likes certainty and smooth handovers rather than Krenlinology.

Particularly unfortunate was Sir Richard's choice of Tesco as an example of a company that also had a succession question - the retirement of Lord MacLaurin - but had not been the subject of a welter of speculation about it.

The reason for this is that Tesco handled its succession issue with precision and skill. Everyone knew who the chosen man was well in advance and there was no unseemly jockeying for position. Letting go is always difficult for a business leader of Sir Richard's achievement, but refusal to do so is often a mistake. Does Sir Richard really want to be around when Marks & Spencer issues its first profits warning? It is important for boards to be re-energised by new blood even if - as invariably happens at M&S - it comes from inside the company.

All this said, it is hard to fault Marks &

Sparks and it is on its excellent record that it must ultimately be judged. The strategy of investing heavily at home and abroad, as well as in home shopping, looks promising even though it might cause a pause in profits growth. It is just a shame that the company is allowing a management issue to cloud an otherwise bright picture.

The Biotech buck doesn't stop here

IT IS HARD, reading yesterday's "we did oo wrong" circular from British Biotech, to accept that this finally puts the lid on the extraordinary sequence of allegations which have coloured the company's affairs for the last few months. A brave attempt is made to rebut, point by point, the demolition job performed on the company by its former head of research, Dr Andrew Miller, and to some extent it succeeds. Crucially, however, the circular fails to give investors much confidence in the products the company has been developing, nor does it explain adequately why the company allowed, indeed encouraged, expectations of these compounds to become so inflated.

Furthermore, British Bio admits ominously that the London stock exchange has reopened its investigation into share dealings by directors, and worse, that the US Securities and Exchange Commission has begun a top level investigation into whether investors were misled. This could lay the company open to corporate prosecution and be the grounding for an

overwhelming array of class actions against the company and its advisers. Now why does it seem so unlikely that Dr Keith McCullagh's agreement to stand down as chief executive marks the final decoupage?

And if Dr McCullagh has behaved honourably and impeccably throughout, as the circular insists, who then should shareholders blame for this terrible debacle, this sickening loss in shareholder value. This company would like us to believe it's all down to Dr Miller, who it paints as an em-hittered, misguided man with a very large axe to grind. Whatever the truth, the finger must also reasonably be pointed at the non-executive directors, and particularly the company's chairman, John Raisman, a former head of Shell UK. Dr Miller began to raise his concerns internally at British Bio long before he went public with them. It must have been obvious that a serious difference of opinion was emerging over the company's prospects and development.

Why was it that the chairman and other non-execs failed to nip this dispute in the bud or get to the bottom of its causes? Most biotechs are run by family autocrats, visionary biochemists who believe in the potential of their discoveries with all the passion of a zealot. They are not businessmen or even entrepreneurs out of the usual mould. It is incumbent on the non-execs to be especially careful to rein in the over-enthusiasm of their executives in cases like these. Plainly in this case, they failed utterly to do so. The buck shouldn't stop with Dr McCullagh. Mr Raisman's continued presence at the company inspires little confidence in the future.

Tax rises push up inflation

By Diane Coyle
Economics Editor

TAX INCREASES announced in Gordon Brown's first two Budgets sent headline inflation to a six-year high last month, but also helped set the Government on course to run a budget surplus a year earlier than expected.

Official figures yesterday showed the price consumers are paying for the Iron Chancellor's prudence.

The headline retail price inflation figure jumped to 4 per cent in April from 3.5 per cent the previous month, returning to its highest since May 1992. The underlying measure, which excludes mortgage payments, climbed further away from its target to 3 per cent from 2.6 per cent.

Almost all of the increase in both cases was down to higher taxes - excise duties on petrol and a reduction in mortgage interest relief, along with council tax hikes. The remainder could be accounted for by items such as prescription charges and TV licences.

Inflation measured by the tax and price index - the broadest indicator of the cost of living, including all Budget tax changes - leapt from 2.6 per cent in March to 4.1 per cent last month.

A Treasury spokesman said: "A temporary rise in inflation was expected this month." He added: "Our forecast is for underlying inflation to fall back in July and to remain on track to meet the Government's inflation target over the forecast period."

Most City experts agreed that the rise in inflation will prove temporary, but there was concern that the higher headline rate will nevertheless feed through to wage claims.

James Barty at Deutsche Morgan Grenfell said: "The inflation rate will not stay this high, but it is unfortunate that this has happened when there is already upward pressure on wage rates."

The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee has made it clear that it will not alter interest rates to offset tax-related inflation changes. But shock figures last week showing a jump in earnings growth to just under 5 per cent revived uncertainty about whether borrowing costs have reached their peak.

Separate figures yesterday showed that buoyant tax revenues helped the Government repay £3.4bn of the national debt last month, a much bigger repayment than expected. Tax revenues were nearly 11 per cent higher than the same month last year.

This surge reflected both the continuing strength of the economy and tax increases announced in the July and March Budgets. Income tax payments were up an astonishing 19 per cent year on year due to pay rises, and especially big bonuses. Higher petrol and tobacco duties boosted total customs and excise receipts.

However, the figures also revealed an equally striking picture on the government's spending side of the budget equation. Expenditure by Whitehall departments was just 0.9 per cent higher than the previous April, implying a fall in spending in real terms. In fact, spending was actually lower in cash terms than it had been two years earlier.

The Chancellor has forecast a public sector borrowing requirement of £2.3bn for the current financial year before a move into surplus in 1999/2000.

But even though only one month of the year has passed, most City analysts were predicting a surplus a year early. The impact of slower economic growth is unlikely to hit revenues until next year, and even if speeding starts to rise in real terms the outlook for the government's finances looks rosy.

"The underlying picture is better than the official forecasts," said Adam Cole of HSBC Securities.



The number of people visiting fitness centres has seen explosive growth

Greenalls plans chain of upmarket health clubs

By Andrew Yates

GREENALLS, the pub and hotels group, is planning to set up a chain of upmarket health and fitness clubs to take advantage of the explosive growth in the number of people visiting the gym to tone up those flabby muscles.

Greenalls plans to open its first centre in Cambridge next year on the site of an old British Telecom warehouse which will be given a £4m facelift. The centre will be designed to cater for business people and professionals. The group has another two

sites in the pipeline and could build up to 10 large centres within the next three years. They are likely to be built on suburban greenfield sites. The new concept will also be introduced at a number of city centre budget lodges which the group plans to open over the next few years.

Greenalls already runs the Village family leisure complexes and has sports facilities at its De Vere hotel chain but this will be the first time the group has opened a stand alone fitness chain.

Lord Daresbury, chief executive of Greenalls, said: "The

whole health and fitness area has strong growth potential. We plan to concentrate on the up-market end. There is also a strong market for people over 50 which has been left untapped."

Greenalls is also planning an aggressive expansion of its pub estate from its heartland in the North West and the Midlands, concentrating on growing its leading brands such as Millers Kitchen and Henry's Cafe Bar.

Overall the group plans to invest £220m in the year to September opening 25 new sites. Greenalls will spend another £200m the following year. Investment Column, page 24

BSkyB wins case against Carlton in BDB dispute

BRITISH Sky Broadcasting has won its court case against Carlton Communications, its rival broadcaster, over an outstanding £3.7m compensation payment relating to a contractual dispute between BSkyB and British Digital Broadcasting (BDB), the digital television venture half owned by Carlton. A summary judgment was awarded against Carlton yesterday, with no leave to appeal. The full compensation is likely to total around £4.5m after costs and interest. The payment is the last part of a £50m payment owed to BSkyB by Carlton relating to BSkyB's withdrawal from the BDB venture. Carlton had refused to pay until BSkyB secured the rights to show Premier League football on BDB's service.

Newspaper group bullish

NEWSQUEST, the country's largest regional newspaper group, sees no evidence of any slowdown in economic growth, chairman Jim Brown told shareholders yesterday. The group reported that strong advertising revenues and lower newsprint prices contributed to a 15 per cent rise in underlying operating profits in the first three months of the year. Revenues grew by 9.3 per cent. Mr Brown said the group's recent acquisition of the Review titles for £5m represented a multiple of 1.7 times 1997 sales, a much lower price than is being paid for regional newspapers elsewhere.

Directors' salaries up 5%

BASE salaries of both parent and subsidiary company directors increased by 5 per cent in the year to April 1998, halting a four-year trend of steadily increasing rises, according to the latest survey of UK senior management pay by remuneration advisers Monks Partnership. Total earnings, including bonuses, rose by more than 8 per cent for directors of parent companies and about half that for those in subsidiary companies, but Monks points out that 29 per cent of chief executives and managing directors and about a quarter of other directors received no bonus despite participating in a plan.

CU pays £207m for insurer

COMMERCIAL UNION yesterday said it was to pay £207m for Berlinische Lebensversicherung, having announced in February that it was in talks with the German life insurer's key shareholders. CU said it would issue new shares worth DM567.42m, (£96m), to acquire 94.6 per cent from majority shareholders Munich Re and Allianz AG. Berlinische Leben has DM950m in premium income and a 1 per cent share of the German life insurance market.

Irish firm bids for Trafford Park Estates

GREEN PROPERTY, an Irish company, said it offered to buy Trafford Park Estates for £146m in stock by exchanging 46 Green shares for each 100 Trafford shares held.

The offer of approximately 212p a share represents a premium of 33 per cent over Trafford's 159.5p closing price on 12 May, the last business day before Green's approach was made public. The board of Trafford said it was considering the offer and advised share-

holders to take no action pending its recommendation.

"The acquisition of Trafford Park Estates is in line with our strategy to increase our industrial holdings in the UK," said Stephen Vernon, Green Property's managing director.

Last week Trafford said it will delay for two weeks a shareholders' vote on its bid for Barlows, a property developer in the North-west, to allow time to assess whether Trafford itself should be sold. Earlier this

month Green offered to buy Trafford Park for £126m to £139m on condition Trafford's bid for Barlows is called off.

Trafford rejected Green's earlier offer, saying it was too low but has since postponed the shareholders' vote on the bid for Barlows until 29 May.

Green is also offering a cash alternative to Trafford shareholders of 190p for each Trafford Park share held. Trafford Park shares rose 11.5p, or 6.4 per cent, to 191p, having

climbed from 159.5p on 12 May. Trafford Park, with the approval of Barlows' board, had offered to pay one of its shares for every 2.61971 Barlows shares held, valuing the company at £26.7m. The valuation took place before Trafford Park shares jumped due to Green's bid. Trafford Park holds industrial property in Manchester and other centres in the UK, in addition to several development sites.

— Bloomberg

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Canteens at work set to go up-market

By Andrew Yates

THE DAYS when staff canteens offered nothing more than curled up sandwiches, greasy fry-ups, lukewarm coffee or stodgy deserts may be numbered. According to Compass, one of the world's largest contract caterers, employees are demanding healthier and more sophisticated menus. Workers want to chomp on baguettes and fruit rather than sandwiches and spotted dick, and quaff cappuccinos rather than plain old filter coffee.

Compass has introduced a new food service, Pentagon, to cater for this change in tastes. More salads and snack items are available, as well as the "deep pan", where customers can watch their food being prepared. The group is also planning to introduce more brands such as Harry Ramsden's fish and chips, as well as some of its own concepts such as Upper Crust baguettes. "We want to create a new breed of staff restaurant. Our research has shown us this is what people want," said Roger Matthews, the chief executive of Compass.

Compass indicated yesterday that it would fight for its independence, despite intense speculation that the group may receive a bid approach. Francis Mackay, Compass's chief executive, said: "I do not see how anybody can afford to pay for the future growth we expect to generate. We don't need anybody else to help us."

Investment Column, this page

Whitbread offloads Beefeater

By Andrew Yates

WHITBREAD has offloaded 40 of its Beefeater restaurants to a management buy-in team and a consortium of venture capitalists, led by NatWest Equity Partners (NWP), for £36m.

The Crowded House Pub Company, as the new group will be called, plans to scrap the Beefeater restaurants at the sites and introduce a new chain of pub restaurants. It also plans to double the size of its business over the next three to four years by acquiring about 10 new sites a year. Crowded House could then look to float on the stock market, or sell out to a larger operator.

Crowded House will be run by Bernard Wright, a 48-year-old former Whitbread employee, who has worked at the group's pub business and for the last few years has specialised in strategic planning. He said yesterday: "We want to take the pubs away from the frozen chips and steak market to concentrate on fresher food in a more relaxed atmosphere because that is where the market is going."

The venture capitalists have been attracted to the deal by the rapid growth in the pub food sector in the UK. Over the past few years the UK pub food market has grown at twice the rate of the restaurant market and NWP reckons that almost two-thirds of those people who

choose to eat out do so in a pub.

Mr Wright added: "We are delighted to have secured this outstanding opportunity and we believe these pubs are the finest selection of food-led properties to have been made available in recent years. Crowded House is well placed to develop fully their potential in the growing pub-based eating-out market."

David Thomas, Whitbread's chief executive, said: "This sale is part of our continuing strategy to dispose of non-core assets, which in 1997/98 realised £144m. The outlets we have sold, whilst trading profitably, no longer fit Beefeater's brand profile."

However, he maintained that the company remains totally committed to the Beefeater brand and will be opening six new sites during this financial year, with another 10 sites acquired for completion in 1999.

The pub sector has burst into life over the past 12 months, with a flood of deals leading to the emergence of a host of new and acquisition hungry chains.

NWP has invested nearly £170m in the leisure sector over the past few years, including the acquisition of Pubmaster, the pub retailing subsidiary of Brent Walker, in a deal worth £171m in 1996, and the £49m buy-out of First Leisure's bingo division earlier this year.



Philip Newton, deputy managing director, and David Wallis, group managing director, outside a branch of the Perfume Shop, of which there are now 38

Perfume Shop performs sweetly for Marchant

MERCHANT Retail Group, which owns the Perfume Shop, yesterday unveiled a 54 per cent rise in pre-tax profits as turnover jumped 37 per cent, producing record results.

An ambitious programme saw the Perfume Shop, a specialist perfumery chain, open new stores in Manchester, Middlesbrough and Romford, taking its number of stores to 38. The

company plans to open another 10 stores this financial year, including stores at Bristol and Trafford Park.

Merchant said that it was looking to build the Perfume Shop nationally while expanding its department stores group, Joplings, regionally. Joplings currently operates six stores, five in the North-east and one in the Midlands.

Imperial keeps up overseas growth policy

By Andrew Yates

IMPERIAL Tobacco, the UK's second largest cigarette manufacturer which was recently spun off from Hanson, is to continue its policy of international expansion to counter the continued decline in the domestic tobacco market.

Imperial Tobacco's profits for the six months to March rose just 2 per cent to £146m but its international operating profits rose by a quarter to £45m thanks to the acquisition of Rizla, the world's largest cigarette paper producer, and growth of brands such as John Player Special American Blend.

When its £650m purchase of Douwe Egberts Van Nelle, the Dutch tobacco business, is completed in July, more than 30 per cent of operating prof-

it will come from overseas. However, that deal could be the group's last major purchase for a while.

Gareth Davis, Imperial's chief executive, said: "Sizeable acquisitions are off the agenda in the near future. We need to absorb all that and integrate it," he said of DEVN, adding: "Longer term, we are wedded to the strategy of growing internationally."

International sales growth is "pretty much across the board," Davis said. "We've had a strong performance in Europe, which is obviously our main market, but about 30 per cent of our international sales come from our targeted international growth markets of Asia-Pacific and Africa."

After a strong run, Imperial's shares slipped 1p to 449p yesterday.

COMPANY RESULTS

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Barclays (Q)	291.2m (281.0m)	21.7m (26.3m)	13.4p (24.1p)	3.2p (2.0p)
Com UK (Q)	18.8m (12.4m)	2.414m (1.922m)	4.50p (3.81p)	0.50p (0.40p)
Clasfina Properties (FY)	744.4m (57.4m)	3.65m (1.7m)	17.49p (11.35p)	18.4p (13.4p)
Comcast (Q)	474.33m (557.57m)	55.49m (57.75m)	17.85p (15.65p)	7.2p (8.7p)
Heidelberg (Q)	25.5m (10.0m)	2.504m (1.057m)	10.3p (8.7p)	0.8p (1.2p)
Imperial Tobacco (FY)	2.00m (1.94m)	1.40m (1.43m)	19.6p (18.8p)	7.8p (7.2p)
Jopling (FY)	101.2m (95.3m)	1.401m (1.038m)	20.0p (14.8p)	7.8p (7.35p)
Morris & Spencer (FY)	8.24m (7.34m)	1.168m (1.102m)	28.1p (26.7p)	14.3p (13p)
Metrolife (Q)	17.8m (16.8m)	2.816m (2.698m)	9.50p (8.05p)	2.10p (-)
Patel Bros (FY)	82.85m (3.52m)	1.05m (0.52m)	2.47p (0.14p)	- (-)
STC Telephony (Q)	14.4m (10.3m)	1.55m (1.11m)	2.6p (2.1p)	14.0p (-)
Silicon (Q)	11.3m (10.7m)	0.232m (0.401m)	1.80p (2.61p)	1.45p (1.45p)

(F) - Full (Q) - Interim EPS is pre-tax profits. Dividend to be paid as a FD

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY ANDREW YATES

Compass and cappuccino

NO WONDER Compass, the contract caterer, has attracted interest from potential bidders. It is growing at such a pace it was bound to end up on someone's takeover menu.

Turnover rose 17 per cent to top £2bn in the six months to March and pre-tax profits jumped by a fifth to £68m. Of course, a substantial part of this growth can be attributed to recent acquisitions. Even so, earnings per share, a fairer measure of underlying expansion, rose 13 per cent. That increase is an even more impressive 28 per cent if you strip out the distortion in the figures created by the rise in the value of the pound.

Compass is the first to admit that nobody can continue to grow at such a rate. There are several reasons, however, to suggest it may maintain its double-digit earnings growth.

First, and foremost, only a quarter of the £100bn catering market is currently outsourced to third parties such as Compass. In other words, there is plenty to go for in a rapidly expanding market. And Compass is well placed to pick up customers who are increasingly hiring one caterer for their global or continental catering needs.

Secondly, Compass has only just started to reap the huge potential benefits from increased purchasing power, which should eventually help margins rise to as high as 8 per cent.

Returning to that takeover rumour, the likes of Sir Clive Thompson's Rentokil Initial are known to have eyed the group up. It is that, along with the group's continued expansion, that has caused the meteoric rise in its share price and pushed it into the FTSE 100. This, in turn, has pushed its value even higher as tracker funds have piled in.

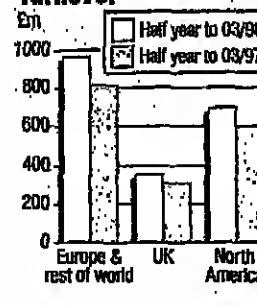
Ironically, that rise has made a bid less likely. Compass is quite happy to hang on to its independence, and who can blame it given its growth prospects.

Analysts forecast current year profits of £157m rising to £188m next year, putting the shares, which rose another 25p to 1140p yesterday, on a prospective P/E ratio of 34, then 29. Even after the sharp increase in the share price the group remains good long-term value.

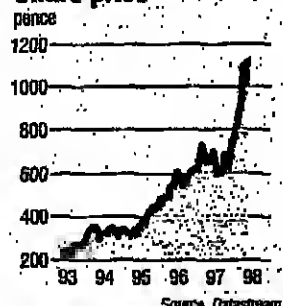
Compass: At a glance

Market value: £3,780m, share price 1140p (+25p)					
Trading record	95	96	97	97-98	98
	12 months to end September			6 months to end March	
Turnover (£bn)	1.5	2.7	3.7	1.7	2.0
Pre-tax profits (£m)	73.2	127.6	137.8	56.4	67.8
Earnings per share (p)	22.6	31.5	31.2	12.9	14.6
Dividends per share (p)	7.6	8.6	9.8	3.1	3.5

Turnover



Share price



End to gloom for Berisford

BERISFORD, the Magnet kitchens and Weibull catering equipment business, has been on an improving trend for some time now, after a period when it seemed to shower profit warnings around like confetti. The shares have doubled over the past year and rose 15.5p to 248.5p yesterday on the back of a good set of interim figures.

Pre-tax profits rose 50 per cent to £21.7m and both sides of the business are performing strongly. Weibull, which supplies grills and ovens to the fast-food industry, has improved profits by 21 per cent even though the US market grew by just 2 per cent. It has developed new products and increased its margin by 0.8 percentage points. And the long-running strike at its Darlington factory is over.

Acquisitions are now on the menu, particularly in the Far East, where Berisford hopes to take advantage of lower asset prices. It has already made one deal in Thailand and is looking at South Korea and Malaysia too, with a war chest of up to £300m.

Magnet has also done well in a kitchen market that has been patchy at best. Though the market grew by 5 per cent, Magnet's sales rose by 11 per cent. Though the market is predicted to grow by only 2-3 per cent over the next year or so, Magnet hopes to improve profits by increasing its margins. This means there could be some mileage yet in the share price. On forecasts

of £46m, the shares trade on a forward rating of 11. Still reasonable value.

Greenalls full of good ideas

GREENALLS was slow to catch on to the huge investment put into the branded pub market by its competitors. But it is finally doing the right thing and trying to catch up, and underlying operating profits rose 8 per cent to £39.7m in the six months to March.

Plans to exploit the buoyant budget hotel market by building a third more rooms at its Premier Lodge chain make sense, as does a move to set up its own up-market health and fitness business to complement the existing Village family leisure complexes.

Along with the rest of the sector, it had its profits dampened by poor spring weather, although customers have returned in their droves with the warmer weather.

With the consumer economy and retail sales showing signs of a downturn and customers in its main trading area, the North-west, feeling the full impact of the strong pound, Greenalls is not going to produce great growth. That said, it appears to have put its main problems behind it.

Merrill Lynch forecasts full-year profits of around £163m, putting the shares, which slipped 14.5p to 487p yesterday, on a prospective P/E ratio of 12. The shares have risen by about 10 per cent since we tipped the group as one of our stock of the year, and they remain good value.



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Uncertainty over Tesco as Sainsbury romps ahead

MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN

TESCO was the subject of a two-way pull as investment houses clashed over prospects for its shares.

Goldman Sachs, the big American group, emerged as a keen supporter, suggesting the price should go to 665p. But Henderson Crosthwaite adopted a much more cautious tone, putting the shares on its sell list.

It is negative about superstore chains in general and Tesco in particular following its Far East adventure, a £111m controlling stake in Lotus, Thailand's leading hypermarket chain.

Tesco shares hit a 603p peak in March. They have drifted since then and fell a further 5.5p to 524p, giving Henderson the satisfaction of at least achieving a successful short-term call.

J Sainsbury, however, was the best performing blue chip, gaining 34.5p to 515.5p following the surprise sale of its controlling stake in the Amer-

ican Giant Food operation for \$600m.

The rest of the stock market recovered some of Monday's fall, helped along by a firm New York, a feeling that US interest rates will remain unchanged and a more settled display by Far Eastern markets. The crop of corporate results were generally satisfactory, free from any shocks.

Footsie climbed 51.6 points to 5,877.8. Mid and small caps, however, made much of the running. Mid caps were the subject of busy two-way trading, with the index finishing a little firmer at 5,795.2, up 2.7. The small caps, however, enjoyed another strong session and the index hit another peak, up 9 at 2,760.5.

Next, the retailer, expressed relief that its yearly shareholders' meeting did not produce more gloomy tidings, gaining 33.5p to 521p. And Allied Unichem, the chemist chain, bounded 22.5p to 475p following the acquisition of a

36 per cent stake in an Italian pharmaceutical wholesaler.

Enterprise Oil, indulging in a US investment roadshow, fell 8p to 580p. Rolls-Royce fell 3.75p to 284p ahead of its US presentations and Biffitt, showing analysts its South African interests, fell 3.5p to 158.5p.

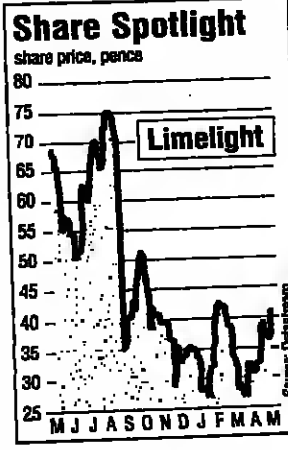
"Gramplan, the Edinburgh Woolen Mills group, held at 146p after meeting analysts; Cobham, the aerospace and defence group, put on 13p to 1,160p following the Henderson Crosthwaite investment dinner.

Takeovers did more to help sentiment. Engineer TIT's agreed £267m strike at EIS sent the target's shares soaring 154p to 500p. TIT fell 16p to 587p.

Tunstall, an electrical group, gained 30p to 159p as the management and friends pushed in a 160p cash offer.

Vesper Therapeutics, the shipbuilder, reached a 12-month high with a 50p gain to

900p. Once again talk of bid action is in the air. A Continental group is said to be circling. Linelight, the struggling bathroom and kitchen group, edged ahead 4p to 41p. Bid speculation is behind the rise. There is even talk that founder Stephen Boler may be persuaded to bid, returning the company to private status. The shares arrived at 175p in Oc-



tober 1996 and touched 200p before crashing as profits became losses.

Chesterfield Properties fell 30p to 612.5p after declaring takeover talks, thought to be with MEPC, had ended because the two sides could not agree on a price. At one time GE Capital, the big financial group controlled by General Electric of the US, was interested. It pulled out, leaving the way clear for MEPC.

Telemetric, the electronic group, charged 9p higher to 56.5p following a signalled offer for its 57 per cent owned US offshoot, GTI Corporation. The bid would value GTI at \$33.8m.

Financials were firm. Lloyds TSB was helped by Morgan Stanley support, improving 30.5p to 86p. Others to shake off recent uncertainty included Halifax, up 32p to 824p and Bank of Scotland, 82p higher at 700p. Even Northern Rock managed a 9.5p advance to 558p.

TAKING STOCK

DESIRE Petroleum, involved in the search for oil and gas off the Falkland Islands, jumped 34.5p to 209p as it cautiously admitted encouraging developments.

Amerasia Hess, the US group has encountered oil and gas shows during drilling in the North Falklands Basin. It is "far too early", say Desire, to say whether the well will turn out to be commercially viable.

The company has a 20 per cent interest in the development. Greenwich Resources gained 2.75p to 23.5p and Westmont 12p to 157p. They each have 20 per cent of Desire.

ACTION at Millennium & Copthorne, the hotel chain. There was talk that Hong Leong Investments, the Far Eastern group with 55.1 per cent, had tried to acquire 5 million but had to be content with getting rid of 3.5 million. Millennium shares fell 2.5p from their peak to 617p.

Cable & Wireless was again buzzing as talk of takeover action continued to circulate. The shares rose 17p to 721p. A modest rally by Hong Kong shares helped but buyers see the group as a likely target in the battle to establish domination in the world telephone industry.

Securicor put on a further 6.5p to 437.5p. Here the story is the sale of its stake in the Cellnet mobile phone group to BT, already the major shareholder. BT, it is thought, is anxious to get full control of Cellnet and has obtained tentative government approval. Securicor would probably return some of the cash to shareholders with the rest earmarked for its security business.

Delancy Estates signalled reverse takeover involves James Riddell, son of British Land chief John Riddell. He is negotiating to pump assets into the group in exchange for shares priced at around 100p. Delancy shares fell 8.5p to 101p.

Share Price Data
Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is the latest twelve months' declared gross dividend as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, including extraordinary items but excluding exceptional items. Other details: 15 rights to 1 share; 1 share to 10 shares; 1 share to 10 shares; 1 share to 10 shares.

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Market Leaders: Top 20 volumes

FTSE 100 index hour by hour

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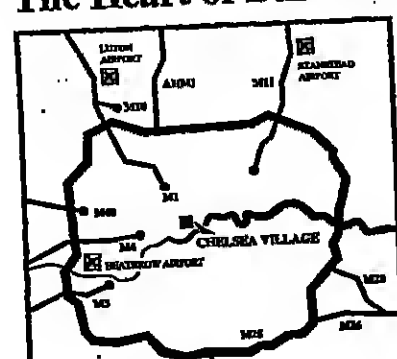
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Foreign Exchange Rates

Country	Sterling	Spot	1 month	3 months	Dollar	Spot	1 month	3 months	D-Mark
UK	1000	26007	26007	26007	0.656	0.656	0.656	0.656	0.340
Australia	2613	1035	1035	1035	1.058	1.057	1.057	1.057	0.748
Canada	2040	5917	5917	5917	0.725	0.725	0.725	0.725	0.694
France	2359	2359	2359	2359	6.554	6.554	6.554	6.554	0.208
Germany	2359	2359	2359	2359	14503	14494	14494	14494	0.340
Denmark	717	1677	1677	1677	8.084	8.084	8.084	8.084	0.160
Finland	8802	8790	8789	8789	1.101	1.101	1.101	1.101	0.078
Italy	971	1677	1677	1677	5.626	5.626	5.626	5.626	0.336
Japan	2359	2359	2359	2359	1.701	1.701	1.701	1.701	0.048
Greece	5018	1073	1073	1073	1.701	1.701	1.701	1.701	0.048
Hong Kong	1152	1152	1152	1152	3.0629	3.0629	3.0629	3.0629	0.438
Ireland	2292	1146	1146	1146	5.070	5.070	5.070	5.070	0.178
Israel	1291	2037	2037	2037	1.701	1.701	1.701	1.701	0.048
Malaysia	6259	6357	6357	6357	3.873	3.873	3.873	3.873	0.080
Netherlands	3398	3398	3398	3398	2.004	2.004	2.004	2.004	0.127
New Zealand	2079	1296	1296	1296	1.899	1.899	1.899	1.899	0.057
Portugal	3573	1073	1073	1073	1.701	1.701	1.701	1.701	0.048
Spain	2079	1296	1296	1296	1.899	1.899	1.899	1.899	0.057
South Africa	2613	1035	1035	1035	1.058	1.057	1.057	1.057	0.748
Sweden	2359	2359	2359	2359	6.554	6.554	6.554	6.554	0.208
Switzerland	1292	1146	1146	1146	5.070	5.070	5.070	5.070	0.178
US	1000	26007	26007	26007	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	0.500

Other Spot Rates

Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	1000	1000	China	0.0254	0.0254
Brazil	1000	1000	India	7.1559	7.1559
Cash Rep	1000	1000	Indonesia	0.3949	0.3949
Egypt	1000	1000	Israel	0.048	0.048
France	1000	1000	Japan	0.048	0.048
Hungary	1000	1000	Malaysia	0.080	0.080
India	1000	1000	Netherlands	0.127	0.127
Indonesia	1000	1000	Portugal	0.057	0.057
Israel	1000	1000	Spain	0.057	0.057
Japan	1000	1000	Switzerland	0.500	0.500
Malaysia	1000	1000	UK	0.500	0.500
Netherlands	1000	1000			
Portugal	1000	1000			
Spain	1000	1000			
Sweden	1000	1000			
Switzerland	1000	1000			
US	1000	1000			

Interest Rates

Country	Bank	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year	Country	Bank	1 month	3 months
UK						US			
UK	7.25%	Germany	2.50%	Prime	8.50%	Japan	Discount	0.50%	
France		Lombard	4.50%	US		Belgium	Discount	0.3850	
Intervention	3.90%	France		Fixed Funds	5.00%	Denmark	Central	0.160	
Discount	5.00%	Denmark	8.50%	Spain	4.50%	France	Discount	0.208	
Netherlands	3.90%	Denmark	5.00%	10-1/2 Ave	4.50%	Germany	Discount	0.208	
			4.00%	Repo/Repo	4.50%	Italy	Discount	0.336	

Bond Yields

Country	3mth	1 yr	5 yr	10 yr	30 yr	Country	3mth	1 yr	5 yr	10 yr	30 yr
Australia	4.55	-0.02	4.58	-0.04	5.00	-0.07	5.87	-0.08	5.65	-0.07	
Canada	4.66	0.01	4.68	0.02	4.99	0.02	4.61	-0.01	5.32	-0.02	
ECU	4.28	0.00	4.28	0.00	4.28	0.00	4.28	0.00	4.28	0.00	
France	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	
Germany	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	
Hong Kong	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	
Italy	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	
Japan	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	
Netherlands	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	
Portugal	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	
Spain	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	
Sweden	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	
Switzerland	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	
US	5.05	0.03	5.05	0.01	5.50	0.01	5.50	0.01	6.65	0.01	

Money Market Rates

Overnight	1 week	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year						
Treasury Bills											
LIBOR											
Dollar Bank Depos	400	744	728	738	738	744	747	744	750	744	750
Domestic Bank Depos	738	738	738	738	738	744	747	744	744	744	750
London Bank Depos	738	738	738	738	738	744	747	744	744	744	750
Sterling Cds											
3M Euro Cds											
ECU Deposits											

Life Financial Futures

Contract	Settlement	High	Low	Open	Close	Settlement	High	Low	Open	Close
Long Gt	Jun-88	107.78	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72
1 Yr Gt	Jun-88	107.78	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72
3 Mth Euro	Jun-88	107.78	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72
3 Mth Euro	Jun-88	107.78	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72
3 Mth Euro	Jun-88	107.78	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72
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3 Mth Euro	Jun-88	107.78	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72
3 Mth Euro	Jun-88	107.78	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72	107.72
3 Mth Euro	Jun-88	107.78	107.72							

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Dr Barth McEllish

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Seagram set for PolyGram victory

POLYGRAM, the world's largest music group, looks set to be sold to Seagram of Canada after a second buyout team dropped out of the bidding.

According to American press reports, the investment group led by Michael Ovitz, a former Walt Disney president, has decided not to bid for PolyGram. The Ovitz group, which comprised the leveraged buy-out firms Forstmann Little & Co and Thomas H Lee, is the second buyout team to drop out of the race after the withdrawal of a group led by Texas Pacific.

Industry sources now say PolyGram - which owns the record labels behind acts such as U2 and Sheryl Crow and whose roster of artists includes Elton John, Bon Jovi and Luciano Pavarotti - will almost certainly fall to Seagram for a cash-and-shares offer worth around \$10.5bn.

The board of Philips Electronics, which owns 75 per cent of PolyGram, met last night to discuss Seagram's offer. Philips declined to comment yesterday on media speculation surrounding the deal.

Philips executives are understood to have met Edgar Bronfman, Seagram's chief executive, in New York last week. The Bronfman family owns a controlling 35 per cent stake in Seagram.

Rumours circulated that the Seagram board had met on Monday to discuss the bid and were considering combining an offer for PolyGram with a sale of its Tropicana Beverage Group and its stake in Time Warner.

According to some sources, Seagram is considering spinning off its Tropicana fruit businesses through an initial public offer and selling its 11 million Time Warner shares to help fund its acquisition of PolyGram.

Seagram wants to add PolyGram, the world's largest record company with 17 per cent of the \$40bn world market, to its Universal Music division. A deal would transform Seagram's music interests currently ranked sixth in the league of global music companies, behind companies such as PolyGram, Time Warner, EMI and Bertelsmann.

However, Universal Music still has an estimated market share of 6 per cent, prompting market speculation that any deal could prompt competition concerns.

Seagram's interest in PolyGram was sparked by Philips' declaration earlier this month that it was reviewing its stake in PolyGram. Last Thursday Philips confirmed it was talking to Seagram.

- Agencies

TI bids £267m for EIS group

By Peter Thal Larsen

TI, the engineering giant, has the financial firepower to spend another £500m on acquisitions, although it is unlikely to do another deal in the near future, the chairman, Sir Christopher Lewintoo said yesterday.

He was speaking after TI launched a £267m offer for EIS, the quoted fluids and aerospace engineering group. If the deal goes through, it will take TI's spending on acquisitions in recent months to about £600m.

However, Sir Christopher pointed out that the company was about to receive a £200m payment for its 50 per cent stake in Messier-Dowty, the landing gear maker, which it sold last year.

"We've got the capacity to spend £500m and we're going to use it," Sir Christopher said, pointing out that the group always had three or four targets in its sight. "You just don't know when they're going to pop up."

"If the ideal situation came up we would be able to move on it," he said, though he added that he thought such a scenario was "unlikely".

Sir Christopher said that EIS fits well with TI's existing strategy, describing it as a "dou-

ble bolt-on". EIS's couplings and fluid technology business will be integrated with the group's John Crane business, while the aerospace side can slot into TI's Dowty division.

TI said the priority would be to offer EIS's products to its customers around the world, and to improve the group's margins, which have traditionally been around 6 per cent. TI currently makes margins of 12 per cent.

EIS has grown quickly in recent years through an aggressive acquisition policy. Among others it bought Aerostructures Hamble, the aerospace design consultancy which suffered a disastrous flotation in 1995. However, investors were concerned about the group's propensity for issuing shares to pay for acquisition and EIS's share price had suffered.

Before yesterday, they had slipped from a high of 441p to 346p. They put on 144p to close at 500p yesterday.

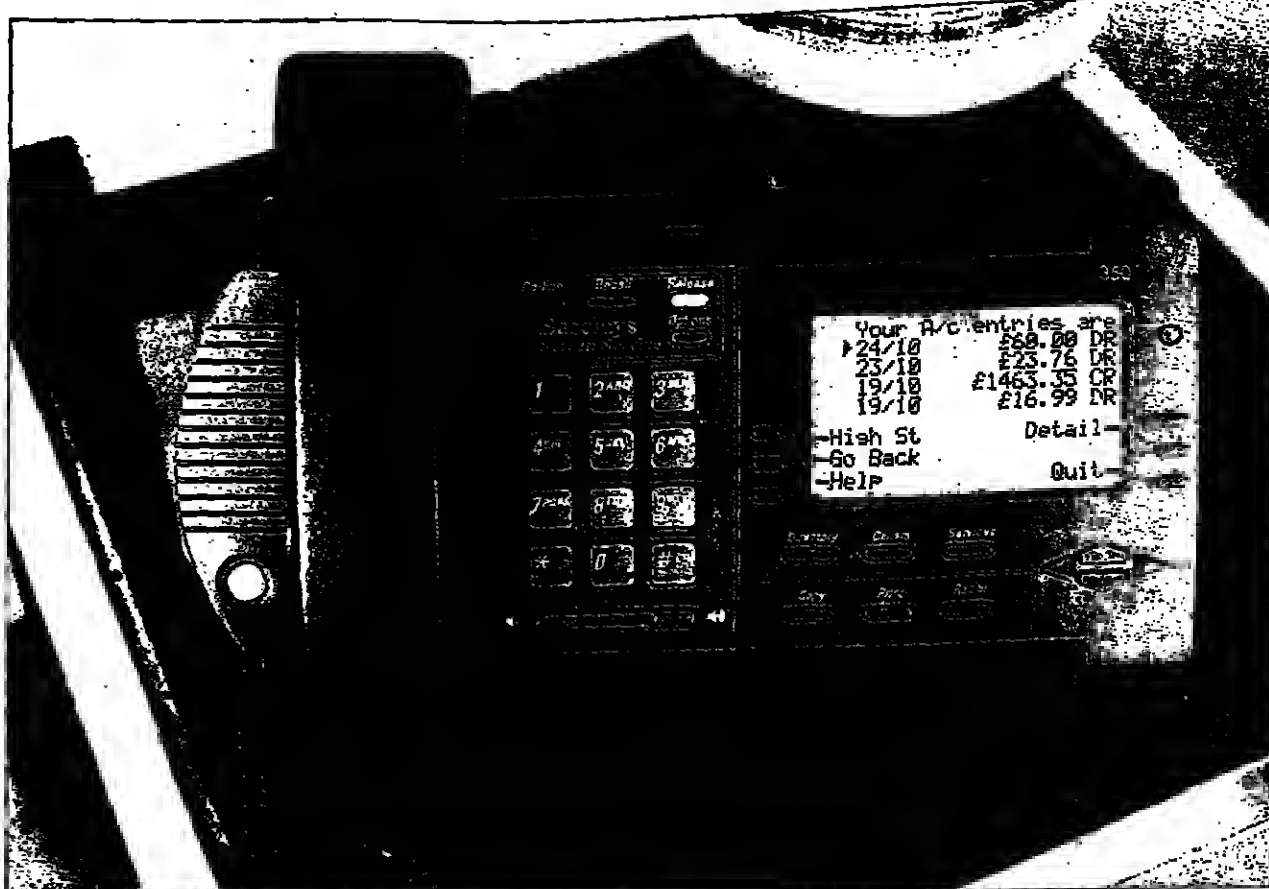
Bill Laule, TI's recently appointed chief executive, said EIS had a collection of good businesses but they had not been integrated properly. "They've got good products which are good quality, but they haven't been able to globalise as fast as their customers wanted," he said.

TI has recently pursued a strategy of introducing global business units, allowing it to serve its customers all around the world. The acquisition of EIS is the latest in a string of bolt-on deals. The company recently spent £212m on S&H, a fluid handling manufacturer. It also bought Sealol, a mechanical seals maker, for £52m.

Analysts broadly welcomed the acquisition. "It looks as if most of it sits reasonably tight with what TI does," said Rory Sweetman, analyst at Greig Middleton. "It looks financially a very shrewd deal and it shows that TI is getting much more aggressive in its whole growth strategy now that it has got the new chief executive and a whole new team." However, the shares dropped 16p to 587p.

Sir Christopher accepted that investors might be worried that the company was taking on too many acquisitions. TI has grown aggressively under his control, and almost all the businesses the company now controls are less than 10 years old.

However, he pointed out that the appointment of Mr Laule as chief executive in January allowed him to spend more time pursuing acquisitions. "Bill runs the business and I do the deals," Sir Christopher said.



Hi-tech: Barclays Bank's new screenphone, which will allow customers to check their balance and past transactions

Barclays 'screenphone' a first

By Lea Paterson

BARCLAYS Bank is to launch the UK's first "screenphone" banking service. The phone, which is being piloted in 10 towns across the UK later this summer, will allow Barclays customers to check balances and past transactions directly.

For more complex services, such as paying bills or transferring money between accounts, customers will still need to speak to an operator.

Customers will also be able to use the screenphone to order goods such as wine, tickets and CDs, as well as to view weather reports.

Gordon Rankin, the man-

aging director of personal banking at Barclays, said the screenphone could be rolled out nationwide as early as next year. He also noted the popularity of screenphones in North America, especially Canada, where there are about 120,000 screenphones with banking services.

According to Mr Rankin, Barclays will be able to expand the range of services offered by the screenphone and add further technology. However, Mr Rankin added the bank would be wary of adding too much technology to the phone. "One of the great advantages of screen banking is that it's simple to use," he said. The phone will cost £99, and there will be a £5 monthly service charge.

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RSA under the weather as first-quarter profits plunge

By Andrew Verity

ROYAL & SunAlliance, Britain's second biggest insurer, yesterday unveiled a 58 per cent plunge in first-quarter profits because of El Niño, ice storms, floods and fires.

Paul Spencer, the group finance director, said: "We have been battered from all sides. In Peru and Australia there's been the El Niño effect. But that's what our business is about and we shouldn't be frightened of it."

After two years of mild weather across the world, RSA will pay claims on £97m for weather losses from 1 January to 31 March, up by 60 per cent on the same quarter last year. Pre-tax profits fell from £209m to just £89m.

The losses go beyond the January storms in the UK. In Canada, a £14m profit was wiped out by Quebec's ice storm in January. Severe Aus-

tralian storms and a giant fire in New Zealand pushed its international business into a similar loss.

Bob Mendelsohn, the group chief executive since December, said: "The weather has influenced our results in the first three months... However, the underlying experience continues in line with our expectations."

RSA warned it would also be hit in the second quarter by claims for damages costing £45m following floods, and storm damage in early April. The strong pound in the first quarter had also cost £16m.

Shares in the company have underperformed the market by 19 per cent over the past three months following a heavy restructuring in December.

The company's two most senior executives both resigned after rumours of a clash over corporate strategy. Roger Taylor, formerly of SunAlliance, and Richard Gamble, former-

ly of Royal Insurance, had shared leadership of RSA since those companies merged.

Mr Mendelsohn said the benefits of the merger were now finally coming through. "We are well on target to secure the £235m of annualised cost savings."

RSA's savings and investment business thrived in the UK in the first quarter of 1998, where new business boomed by 34 per cent. Sales of savings products elsewhere were sluggish.

However, the company is beginning to opt out of a worldwide squeeze on insurance rates which has seen many insurers take losses in an effort to keep their customers.

RSA has adopted a survival strategy of protecting its margins even if it means losing market share. It has begun to edge up its rates on personal motor insurance and commercial property.

But it described other com-

mmercial insurance - such as commercial motor insurance - as "very unsatisfactory".

Some analysts downgraded the shares from buy to hold yesterday. One said a climate of lower interest rates would damage investment income in years to come. Shares rose by 15p yesterday to close at 654p.

Ports owner's US expansion

ASSOCIATED British Ports yesterday said it had agreed to buy American Port Services, operator of six US ports, for £106m cash in an attempt to broaden its base beyond the UK.

The 199p-a-share offer is a 15 per cent premium to the American Port Services share price on 6 May, a day before ABP announced it was in talks to buy the London-listed port operator at that price.

For ABP the move is the latest in a series of measures to boost returns, promised by man-

aging director Andrew Smith, who joined the UK's largest port owner in February 1997.

"APS is an excellent strategic acquisition for ABP which allows us to extend our port operations into North America," Smith said in a statement.

ABP shares were down 2p at 365p. APS shares rose 6.5p to 186p.

APS was established in 1995 as a vehicle to sell shares in the Port of Benicia in California and later expanded with the purchase of the Hobelmann Group,

a port services business on the eastern seaboard of the US. APS also manages nine US airports.

The company had profits before tax of £6.3m on sales of £37.5m last year, compared with ABP's pre-tax profit of £99m on sales of £286.9m.

With 23 ports, ABP handles about one-quarter of the UK's seaborne trade. Smith has reorganised its ports operation and launched a £100m share buy-back in an effort to accelerate earnings growth.

- Bloomberg

PEOPLE & BUSINESS

TERRY MACALISTER



lier sacked and who brought about his downfall. Dr Andrew Millar. For his part, Millar was critical of McCullagh but said he was not a deluge in his removal. "He (McCullagh) did an amazing amount and had lots of courage but at a certain point he lost it. He should have been gently led away," said Millar from his Oxfordshire home.

So what are the chances of Millar, as a self-confessed whistleblower, getting work after allegedly "betraying" his employers by telling top shareholders the company was not doing as well as the board said?

He says: "I have had quite a few people ring me up and am about to go to Aberdeen to discuss a possible job. But it's impossible to know whether people (employers) want someone like me, with 'belonging integrity', as someone described it."

IT CAN be tough out there in the job market, which is why you do not want a new boss sweeping in and making everybody reapply for their own jobs. Latest group to be subjected to this procedure is made up of members of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee.

The Treasury Select Committee has set dates for confirmation hearings for its nine members, including the Bank of England's Governor, Eddie George, his deputies Mervyn King and David Clementi, the Bank's markets supremo Ian Plenderleith and four outside members, Sir Alan Budd, Charles Goodhart, DeAnne Julius and new boy John Vickers.

They get half an hour each next month to tell the MPs just why they deserve the job of setting interest rates.

There is some comfort, however. The questions will be limited to issues concerning "the appointee's personal independence and professional competence". It would take a bold MP to

question the competence of the MPC's eggheads.

As for independence, it would be hard to form a less malleable group than the one the Chancellor has appointed.

IN AMONG all the allegations and counter-allegations at British Biotech, the one word that has not surfaced is the accountants' favourite: fraud.

You might have thought the number-crunchers were more interested in the sharpness of the pencils but anyone who follows the accountancy profession will know it's fraud that turns them on now. Latest proof is Coopers & Lybrand teaming up with West Midlands Police to host a first seminar in Birmingham on the subject.

JOHN GUINNESS, the mandarin responsible for privatising British Gas and the electricity industry, is retiring as chairman of British Nuclear Fuels, the state-owned nuclear fuel reprocessing group. He departs, he says, on a high note with a £13bn order book and the merger with the nuclear generator Magnox Electric completed successfully. Of course the one triumph that eluded him in his six years at the helm of BNFL was persuading his political masters that it too was a suitable candidate for privatisation.

USING a sharp pencil is obviously a skill that comes easily to businessmen and women. For instance, there was the P&O chairman, Lord Sterling, writing about duty-free in yesterday's edition of the Sun. He is not quite up to Richard Littlejohn standards. About his meanness words were addressed to EU finance ministers, to whom he says: "We are not looking for hand-outs." Slightly more poetic stuff is believed to be on offer from Charterhouse Bank director Janet Neel. She has written a novel called *A Timely Death*, which sounds a bit more racy than *Save Our Duty-Free*.

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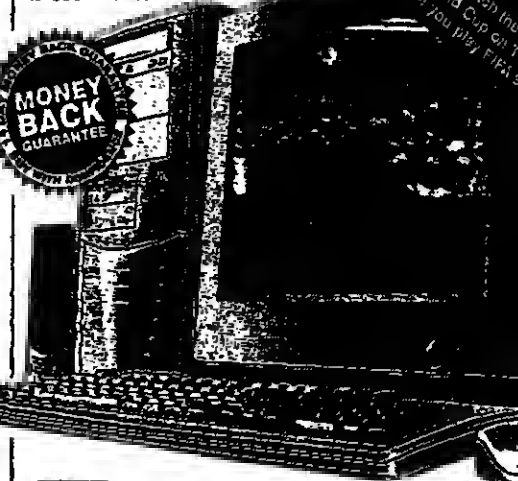
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A Derby dream runs out of puff

By Richard Edmondson
at Goodwood

THEY say, quite unfairly, that the Predominate Stakes is a poor proxy to the Derby. For since Iroquois won here in 1979 on the way to the Blue Riband it has become one of the most definitive pointers to Epsom in the calendar. Anything that runs in the race has got absolutely no chance on the Surrey Downs two weeks later.

This consistency was maintained yesterday when Rabah, Hamdan Al Maktoum's second string, won the Listed contest, beating his owner's better-fancied runner, Mutamam, into second place. Rabah's prospects at Epsom are compromised by the fact that he will not run in the race. Mutamam might.

The latter should have reappeared in the Newmarket race won by Dr Foog (in which Rabah finished last) but he was bruised a heel at exercise. From then on Mutamam was on a crammer as he cantered morning and night, and it was clear yesterday he had not spent enough time under a blanket with his torch.

Mutamam did all the child-like things you expect from a horse making his three-year-old debut. He pulled, he hung and he changed legs, and, by the time he got the idea, Rabah had flown for a half-length victory.

Afterwards, Mutamam exhibited the distress of the unfit. If he did, had wolf had puffed like him, all three little piglets would have been out on the street. "He's blowing more than any horse I've run this year, but it was disappointing all the same because, to be quite frank, if you're going to run a horse in the Derby you want to see a bit better than that," Alec Stewart, the trainer, said.

Rabah was probably feeling the exertion as well as his jock-

ey, Pat Eddery, was suspended for three days for using the whip with excessive frequency. Richard Hills was even naughty in the following contest and banned for five days for irresponsible riding aboard Volley. Rabah's yard is likely to be represented in the Blue Riband by Haami, the 2,000 Guineas fifth, beaten two and three-quarter lengths by King Of Kings. Haami has some fast relatives and the main concern is his ability to last out 12 furlongs. "It's awfully difficult to tell whether he'll get a mile and a half but he should in the 2,000 Guineas that he has got serious Classic speed," John Dunlop said of the horse who is 12-1 for

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Amber Fort
(Goodwood 4.10)
NB: Rhapodist
(Goodwood 4.45)

Epsom with William Hill. "If you've got a good horse, they're probably good horses over six furlongs at two and, hopefully, over a mile and half at three."

"He looked a real threat at the furlong marker [in the Guineas] and then ran on a little one-paced. But over a mile and a half it might be different because he might hold his position and use his serious Classic speed. There is only one way to find out, and that's at Epsom."

Others to make their way into the Derby pending tray yesterday were Courtesee and Second Empire. The former, the winner of the Sandown Trial, may now be switched from Chantilly to Epsom and is quoted at 25-1 with William Hill.

Second Empire was the Derby favourite until he damaged muscles and has been slow to recover. However, he impressed at work yesterday and may even contest Saturday's Irish 2,000 Guineas at the Curragh.



Rabah holds off Mutamam in yesterday's Predominate Stakes at Goodwood

Photograph: Julian Herbert/Allsport

It could be a good weekend for Aidan O'Brien's local bugler to get his sack out on all the races. The wunderkind has six of the 15 runners in the colts' Classic including King Of Kings, though both he and Second Empire are not certain runners. O'Brien also has five entries in Sunday's Irish 1,000.

The Newmarket winner Eg has been supplemented by Godolphin for Saturday, when Britain's most potent challenger may be the French 2,000 winner, Victory Note. His trainer, Peter Chapple-Hyam, has won the race three times in six years and what he saw on the gallops yesterday persuaded him that his percentage may improve further.

Results, page 31

GOODWOOD

2.40: Kieren Fallon can be relied upon to get the best from SILVERING. This looks an especially tricky contest, though.

3.10: Another Fantasy was a 100-1 shot in the 1,000 Guineas but was certainly not disgraced, finishing 7th of 16 runners. MONSIEUR took on less excited opposition when winning at Sandown in April but can improve enough to beat the Richard Hannan filly. Padma seemed unsuited by the track when she lost at the Oaks trial won by Bristol Channel at Lingfield (1m 30s) last time. She may leave that form well behind today. A lot of horses become unbalanced on the switchback course, a factor contributing to two winners being disqualified here yesterday. Off-course punters would be particularly wise to

HYPERION'S TV TIPS

seek out independent bookmakers who pay out on first-past-the-post and the official result.

3.40: Raise A Prince is the bet on the basis of form allied to proven fitness. Sean Woods's five-year-old made his debut at Newmarket this season. He steps up in trip after two runs at 12 furlongs. In contrast, State Fair and Wakeel drop down in distance by more than half a mile after finishing in midfield in the 23-runner Chester Cup. The latter ran much better than his final position that day would indicate.

Goodwood 2.40

Horse	C	H	S	T
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100	14	14	13	13

Each way a quarter the odds, places 1, 2, 3

Goodwood 3.10

Horse	C	H	S	T
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99	14	13	13	13
100	14	13	13	13

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2206 J. J. 12-1 (20%), L. W. 12-1 (20%).
2207 J. J. 12-1 (20%), L. W. 12-1 (20%).
2208 J. J. 12-1 (20%), L. W. 12-1 (20%).
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2238 J. J. 12-1 (20%), L. W. 12-1 (20%).
2239 J. J. 12-1 (20%), L. W. 12-1 (20%).
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2245 J. J. 12-1 (20%), L. W. 12-1 (20%).
2246 J. J. 12-1 (20%), L. W.

'Zulu' ready for double challenge

South Africa's Lance Klusener is a man with a mission, writes Derek Pringle

IN A country where sportsmen are pointed the way to the Wanderers and Ellis Park the moment they can walk, late developers are an uncommon breed. Lance Klusener, South Africa's fast bowling all-rounder, is even more unusual. A country boy from deepest Zululand, he hardly ever made the school first team. Indeed, he only began bowling after he had joined the Army, apparently because it "got to be boring standing around in the field waiting to bat".

Unlike Australia, South Africa's route to sporting experience tends to be an urban one. For Klusener, though, competitive cricket began in the country districts league, a competition described as "social", even by South African standards. Now, some eight years later, he plays the game well enough to have opened both the batting and bowling for his country, albeit in one-day cricket. This is a role he may once again fulfil over the forthcoming Texaco Trophy matches against England, the first of which is tomorrow at The Oval.

What with the first 15 overs now being the most important part of a one-day match, I asked him if he was not a bit daunted at the prospect of being thrust into the front line with both bat and ball?

"Beet there, done that," he said with curt matter-of-factness, a throwback perhaps to his German ancestry. "It may be more difficult to pinch hit over here, though, as the bounce isn't quite the same as back home. But, if I have to do both jobs, I'll know I've done it before."

This uncomplicated attitude

is typical of the man known to the rest of the team simply as "Zulu." According to one journalist, Klusener has "a mental dimension free of clutter," and is not easily fazed.

Apparently, when Daryll Cullinan was once more being psyched out by his *bête noire*, Shane Warne, in the recent series—a state of affairs that eventually saw Cullinan dropped—Klusener could not understand why he simply did not go out and slog Warne round the park. If the philosophy sounds simplistic, Klusener's habit of rising to the big occasion is perhaps one in the eye for pedantic analysts everywhere. His eventual arrival on the big stage 18 months ago—after a short apprenticeship with Natal—perhaps suggested there would be a gentle feeling of the way. Instead, stepping out in the Calcutta haze to make his Test debut against India, his cricketing education was fast-tracked in a match where the whole spectrum between those sporting poles of success and failure was experienced in five days.

Picked primarily for his bowling, he was smashed for 75 runs from 14 overs with Mohammed Azharuddin, India's rubber-wristed batting wizard, flaying him for five fours of successive deliveries. In a cauldron-like Eden Gardens, many would have been destroyed. Yet, in the second innings, with Allan Donald incapacitated by a bruised heel, Klusener returned and, finding a captain willing to back him, took 8 for 64. South Africa won and Klusener recorded the best-ever figures by a South African on his debut.

"Forme the most important



The South African all-rounder Lance Klusener at Canterbury yesterday: 'I know how to hang in there and never give up'

Photograph: Peter Jay

thing is to take your chances. At the time I thought: you've dreamed and worked all of your life to play Test cricket and here it is disappearing fast in a matter of overs.

"In the second innings, we changed a few things such as length, but that success helped set me up to where I am today. To experience that great high so soon after a great low has stood me in good stead. Basically, I now know to hang in there and never give up."

Apart from his undoubted talents as a hustling fast bowler and a hard-hitting left-handed batsman, it is unstinting effort

and aggression that stand out as the central pillars of the 26-year-old's game. "He is a fiery competitor," said Bob Woolmer, South Africa's coach, who claimed Klusener's comeback in Calcutta confirmed that the man had that something special to go the distance.

The dashing deeds did not end there, either, and three Tests later, this time in Cape Town, he took 102 off the Indian attack in just 100 balls. More amazing than the speed, the fastest-ever century by a South African in terms of balls faced, was that he achieved the feat batting at No 9.

The slight downside of these two explosive performances is that it has given him a reputation as a streak player—an all or nothing man—something his recent exclusion from the Test side has made him more aware of. "Obviously I'm looking for more consistency," he admitted. "But it's not a bad thing to have someone in the team who can turn things around quickly."

As a bowler, he has been clocked at 156kmh (about 97mph). But if the raw pace should provide England's batsmen with the odd sobering thought, the fact that some polish, as well as an outswinger, has

been added, courtesy of Dennis Lillee's bowling academy in Madras, makes him a dangerous prospect, particularly in the wake of Donald and Shaun Pollock.

His three years in the Army were spent in intelligence. "The Army was just something I did while I was making up my mind what to study. When I was at school, you could over say that there was a living to be made out of cricket. But then our chance came along, we were allowed back into international cricket. You've got to take a chance like that."

A man of few words, Klusener's upbringing among the

sugar-cane plantations of Natal—Gingindlovu to be precise—is perhaps not exceptional in a country initially colonised by farmers. However, his ability to master Zulu before English was probably a factor in his perfect clarity in his second language about his intentions for the summer.

"To come and beat England at the home of cricket would be a wonderful thing and I'm determined to give my all to accomplish that." Like the Zulu warriors of a century ago, it sounds as if he does not intend taking any English prisoners this summer.

S Africa reveal ominous appetite

By John Collins
at Canterbury

South Africa 290-7
Kent 192
South Africa win by 98 runs

THE EFFICIENT South African machine rolled over a weakened Kent yesterday, and looked in ominous shape for the imminent one-day international.

Kent greeted them with something of a second XI. England squaddies Matthew Fleming and Mark Ealham were absent, of course, while the skipper Steve Marsh and the quick bowler Ben Phillips nursed a brace of groin strains. The coach, John Wright, chose to deplete his stock further by giving a day off to Carl Hooper, Dean Headley, and Alan Wells.

Put into bat by the acting captain, Trevor Ward, the visitors took advantage of a friendly wicket and a hot, still day. After Gary Kirsten's early dismissal Gerhardus Liebenberg and Jacques Kallis set about establishing a stand of substance, mixing scampers with a succession of battering boundaries.

They added 115 and fell almost together, handing the baton to Daryll Cullinan and Hansie Cronje. While Cullinan collected the singles, his skipper danced around, wilding the high blade. It is unusual for a big one-day score not to be pinned on one epic innings. In this case there were four co-terminous contributions.

Had it not been for the accuracy and pace of Alan Inglesden, South Africa could have batted themselves out of sight. The Kent bowlers' three Tests are distant memories, and he is no stranger to the physiotherapist—a self-mocking caricature on the front of his testimonial brochure has him running in to bowl swathed in bandages. But when he is fit and firing, the virtues of line, length, height and speed make him a valuable asset. His four wickets cost just 40 runs, while his seam partner, Julian Thompson, and ex-England spinner Min Patel were hotchutched.

The Kent reply began in unadorned fashion, thanks to the 19-year-old Robert Key. This right-hander has had a disappointing Under-19 tour to South Africa, but only recently made his Championship debut, and this was his first one-day match for Kent of any significance.

He showed little respect to the South African pace trio of Shaun Pollock, Lance Klusener and Allan Donald, and danced down the pitch to the first ball from the veteran spinner Pat Symcox. Alas, a dreadful yaboo of a shot was his undoing after a 50 that included nine boundaries, but Key is a man with a future, and the only Kent batsman to intercept South Africa's victory stroll.

● The South African fast bowler Roger Telemachus, who dislocated his right shoulder in a freak accident in practice last week, is to return home for an operation. He will be replaced on tour by Steve Elworthy.

Newells the jewel for Sussex

By Henry Blofeld
at Worcester

Sussex 258-7
Worcestershire 155
Sussex win by 103 runs

THE CENTREPIECE of a curious AXA League match was a splendid partnership of 181 for Sussex's second wicket between the Newell brothers, Keith and Mark. They took them to a total which was well beyond the Worcestershire batsmen on a benign enough pitch.

The drama for the Newell brothers only began with these bare facts. Wearing Sussex's mustard yellow outfit topped with a crash helmet, they were difficult to tell apart. There were times when even the Sussex scorer was puzzled, to say nothing of the scoreboard operators.

Keith, who is 21 months older than Mark, opened the innings and, after being dropped three times, appeared to reach

his 100 in the 32nd over. One run later the display of brotherly love broke down and Mark was run out attempting a leg bye for, as the scoreboard told us, 72.

One run later, Keith drove Graeme Hick to midwicket and departed to ringing applause with 103 against his name. But a six he had hit to wide mid-on off Hick, and which was originally signalled as such, had been resignalled as a four and this was not spotted until later and so his 103 became 101.

At the end of the innings the scorers had a recount and came up with the surprising statistics that Keith had in reality made only 97, while his brother's score was 77, and the partnership had, reasonably enough, come back from 183 to 181. The only inescapable fact is that this was the highest stand for Sussex by two brothers against Worcestershire at New Road in a Sunday League match played on a Tuesday.

Maybe it was a case of divine intervention for no longer rendering down to Sunday the things that are Sunday's. For all that, the Newells played some lovely strokes against some pretty ordinary Worcestershire bowling. The brothers dispatched long hops and full tosses to the boundary, almost invariably finding the gaps between the fielders, and both reached their highest score in the competition before the middle order collapsed against the off-spin of Hick.

The Worcestershire batsmen were never able to make sufficient headway against steady Sussex bowling well managed by their acting captain, Mike Bevan. Keith Newell made up for some of the disappointment of missing his 100 by picking up four wickets at medium pace and Sussex, who lost their first three AXA games, have now won their last two in what is turning out to be quite a season for them.

Another injury for Munton

TIM MUNTUN'S injury problems returned on the second day of Warwickshire's three-day fixture against Oxford University at The Parks yesterday.

Munton, who missed the whole of last season while recovering from back surgery, pulled up with a tweaked hamstring midway through the morning session. He could be out of action for a fortnight.

A career-best 73 from Jason Molina led a creditable Oxford reply to Warwickshire's first innings of 307 for 7, as the students declared at 269 for 9 off 93 overs. Warwickshire scored a rapid 64 without loss off 13 overs before the close.

At Fenners, Durham closed on 186 for 1 in their second innings, 337 ahead of Cambridge University, who were dismissed for 119 in their first innings.

Handy Hancock is the hero

TIM HANCOCK played a significant role in ensuring that Gloucestershire condemned struggling Nottinghamshire to their sixth successive defeat in all competitions in the AXA League at Trent Bridge yesterday.

The 26-year-old all-rounder hit a one-day best of 73 to give Gloucestershire's innings a look of some respectability after they had been in early trouble at 58 for 5. Then it was Hancock's smart fielding on the extra cover boundary that gave Gloucestershire a one-run victory in a thrilling finish.

The England Under-19 player Paul Franks needed to hit the last ball for four to win the match for Nottinghamshire. But Hancock thwarted that effort and also stopped Franks from pinching a third run that would have earned the home side a tie.

Mark Alleyne must have been questioning his decision to bat first when his side soon hit

trouble, as Kevin Evans claimed two early victims to set the tone for the first half of Gloucestershire's innings. But Hancock joined Jack Russell at the crease and proceeded to share a sixth-wicket partnership of 98 in 18 overs.

Russell was eventually dismissed by Franks for a workmanlike 40, but Hancock went on to reach 73. That performance was chiefly responsible for Gloucestershire rattling up 93 runs off the last 10 overs.

Nottinghamshire made a poor start to their run chase and lost wickets at crucial points in the early stages, and it was only a half century from Noel Gle, who hit 56, which kept them within range.

There was another close finish at Uxbridge, where Essex fell short on 198 for 7 to lose by two runs against Middlesex.

The Essex opener Darren Robinson made 83 but was then run out and, despite

Stephen Peters making 54, it was not quite enough against their Benson and Hedges Cup quarter-final opponents, Middlesex had earlier made 200 for 8, with Mark Ramprakash top scoring with 57.

Leicestershire also finished just short in their run chase at Derbyshire despite the best efforts of Paul Nixon, who ended up on 50 out in their seven-run defeat.

Derbyshire had set what looked a highly attainable target after being restricted to 190 for 6, in which their Australian opener Michael Slater was the top scorer with 68. But the home side's bowlers put the brakes on Leicestershire's scoring, and Nixon's unbeaten half-century was there they were restricted to 183 for 7.

Tony Penberthy's unbeaten 79 steered Northamptonshire to a seven-wicket victory over Somerset at Taunton.

Scoreboard

AXA League

Derbyshire v Leicestershire
Derbyshire won by seven runs.
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Essex v Middlesex
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England decide on split-level management

Cricket

By David Llewellyn

CRICKET is definitely turning into two ball games — Tests and one-day internationals. Having appointed different captains for each form of the game two weeks ago, with Alec Stewart put in charge of the Test side and his Surrey colleague, Adam Hobbins, handed the leadership of the Test Trophy team, the England and Wales Cricket Board yesterday underlined their divergent thinking by announcing separate tour managers for the England squads in Australia this winter.

The former England captain and selector, Graham Gooch, takes over from Bob Bennett as tour manager for the Ashes Test series Down Under, which gets under way in early November, while the present chairman of selectors, David Graveney, will be in charge of the squad that tackles the one-day series in January 1999. Graveney will also manage the one-day squad for the International Cricket Council Knockout Trophy in Bangladesh

this October and the World Cup in England next year. Graveney said: "It would be silly for us not to make use of Graham's capabilities and it is good to have a selector out there with the tour party to maintain continuity." The ECB international teams director, Simon Pack, explained: "Having separate tour managers is designed to reflect the fact that increasingly the two England squads draw on different personnel." There was some different personnel practising at The Oval yesterday before the opening

Tenax Trophy match against South Africa tomorrow. Among them the Sussex captain, Chris Adams, who has lifted the south coast club this season after joining from Derbyshire. By a freak of the fixtures, Adams misses Sussex's match against his former county at Hove this week, and he said with a grin: "I'm a great believer in destiny. I just hope they stuff Derbyshire." On his call-up he added: "I suppose it has come a lot more quickly than I anticipated. I think Sussex feel that and they probably have mixed feelings, be-

cause I won't be able to captain the side, but I am sure Michael Bevan and coach Peter Moores will carry on the good work." There is a bit of a collection of comeback kings headed by the Leicestershire all-rounder, Chris Lewis. His own recalls number umpteen. His last appearance for England was at The Oval in 1996 when he turned up late on the fourth day and having claimed that he had suffered a puncture was promptly told by the then chairman of selectors, Ray Illingworth, that he would not be considered for

the subsequent one-day series against Pakistan. In fact he has not played at all for England in the intervening 21 months. Yesterday he was first on the ground, working out fully half an hour before the rest of the squad drifted on to the outfield, and when the first of them did emerge from the dressing-rooms Lewis was seen wagging an admonishing finger at them and then pointing to an imaginary wristwatch. Another of the comeback men is Surrey's Alistair Brown, who was dropped after scoring

a hundred two years against India, and returned to modest success in Sharjah at the start of last winter only to find himself out in the cold when Michael Atherton was named captain for the Test and one-day series in the Caribbean. "This is the third time I've come back," Brown said, "but I am not trying to prove people wrong by playing poorly to get dropped only to come back in. In fact, this year I have started the season well. I am happy with my Championship form and my one-day form is very posi-

tive." That echoes the mood of the whole squad. ● Steve Randell, the international umpire, appeared in Hobart Magistrates Court yesterday to face 11 charges of indecent assault against young girls. Randell, a 42-year-old teacher, has stood in 36 Test matches and 88 limited overs internationals and is on the International Cricket Council's umpiring panel. He is due to umpire the opening Test between England and South Africa in England next month. The charges relate to allegations dating back to 1983, the court heard.

Hoddle reads Gascoigne the riot act

Football

By Clive White

WHILE Paul Durkin, England's World Cup referee, was putting the football team straight on what they could and could not get away at the forthcoming French finals, away from the lush playing fields of Bisham Abbey yesterday Glenn Hoddle was brandishing what looked distinctly like a yellow card — or in other words a final caution — at his wayward star Paul Gascoigne.

The England coach declared himself "disappointed" and "upset" about the player's nocturnal habits of the past week, which has seen him out night-clubbing with Rob Stewart and enjoying a beer and a kebab in the wee small hours of the morning with his radio and TV pal, Chris Evans.

Irreplaceable or oot. Gascoigne was left in no doubt of what fate might befall him should he transgress again. In a thinly veiled threat to the Middlesbrough midfielder, Hoddle said that he had told the player "forcibly" what he thought of it all. "He's disappointed me," he said. "I've told him that, he knows it and he's apologised."

While Gascoigne may have been full of remorse in Hoddle's

company he was, though, quite unrepentant when facing the press, during which his loathing of them was all too obvious. "I've never let anybody down when I've put on an England shirt," he said. A fact with which Hoddle concurred. "But what I do outside the game, then that's my problem."

Gascoigne should be grateful he does not play for Saudi Arabia, whom England face on Saturday in their last home game before the finals. Saeed Al-Owairan, the Saudi equivalent of Gazza in both talent and temperament, was once similarly caught with a drink in his hand — only for him it resulted in a 14-month suspension rather than a mere admonishment.

Hard as it may be to envisage Hoddle as a disciplinarian in the Alex Ferguson mould, or even Terry Venables come to that, he has evidently read the riot act to the player who still represents England's best chance of coming home from France bathed in glory. Evco Gascoigne, who clearly did not thank the England hierarchy for making him face the press, admitted that Hoddle was "angry" about his latest extra-curricular activities, which predictably received massive exposure in the popular press.

It sometimes seems as if Hoddle spends most of his

working life decoding England's prize midfielder. He has certainly had to do it to a greater extent than any other England manager. He made the point that he could only control Gascoigne, or any player, while he was "under my wing", though he was quick not to attach any blame to his club manager, Bryan Robson.

"No England manager can control the players," Hoddle said. "Now he's under my wing, hopefully for the next seven weeks. I've had a long chat with Paul and he understands where I'm coming from. I've been disappointed with what I've seen and it's up to him to meet me halfway."

By that, Hoddle clearly meant the Middlesbrough player's lifestyle must change. When asked how fit the player was, Hoddle replied, somewhat despairingly: "He's still 40 per cent away from full match fitness, but we will put him on a special diet and I am confident he will eventually be fitter than he has been in years."

"The problem is that Paul has had four excellent performances for us but he hasn't played since Rome. In between internationals, he doesn't realise the injuries come if you don't keep your body in check."

Hoddle was not prepared to excuse him on the grounds of



The midfielder Paul Gascoigne is again the centre of attention during England's training session at Bisham Abbey yesterday.

Photograph: Reuters

pressure because of who he was any more than he would several other high-profile players — he cited David Beckham and Steve McManaman as two other players who were constantly in the spotlight.

Bobby Robson, the former England manager, has condemned the company that Gascoigne keeps, and Hoddle stopped only just short of doing the same. He took relief from the fact, though, that they

would not be around to lead him astray in France — "unless we get Rod in for a little cooort in the hotel," he joked.

The dangerous time for Hoddle is the five days following England's training camp at

La Manga in Spain, when the players will be allowed to return to their friends and families before setting off for France. Gascoigne and the other players will be reminded that they are still on England duty.

"He doesn't have to go to a night-club or a pub. He can do something else," Hoddle said. "If not, I'll take him home with me — and then I can go out for a good time."

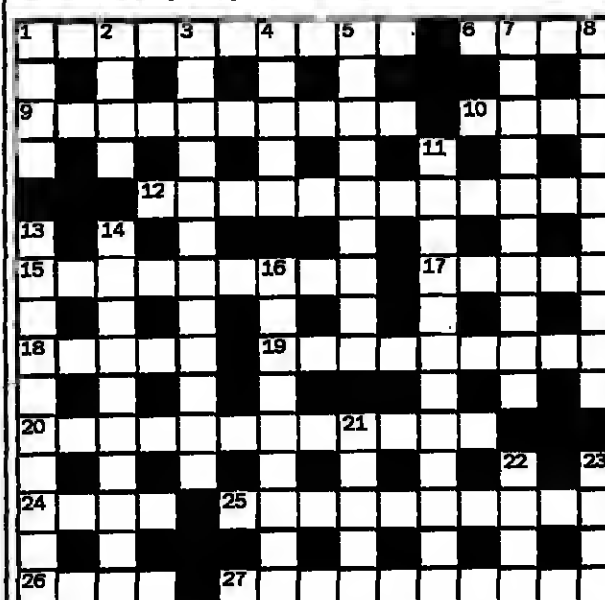
Real's burden, page 31

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3615. Wednesday 20 May.

By Aquila

Tuesday's Solution



SOMEHOW TRIMBLE
U L A E G O M A T
S I E A N L A N D O M N E R
P O V L G R A T
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ACROSS

- 1 Air is released from this small chest-wound (7-3)
- 6 Took advantage of exercise at break of day (4)
- 9 Unpleasant watching Tony advise differendy (5-5)
- 10 Dandy to live next to a university (4)
- 12 Go mad, being sectioned (12)
- 15 Stay with the German for balance (9)
- 17 Cow right to leave wild tundra (5)
- 18 Wader seen in the Gretna area (5)
- 19 Belief of many Indians in one who is forearmed, we hear (9)

DOWN

- 20 Tulsa contest arranged for those seeking people with potential (6-6)
- 24 Where some take deliveries as part removals? (4)
- 25 Young feller in whom nothing was misrepresented (10)
- 26 Results of ambitions (4)
- 27 Earth-moving, pound a hunk? (5-5)
- 1 To make an impression, shift! (4)
- 2 Surface imparted by some porters? (4)
- 3 End trying on clothes in snug (5-7)
- 4 Morning everybody gets up to see a beast of burden (5)

LOOKS BACK

- 5 Looks back defiantly in unfashionable goggles (9)
- 7 Sea-shanties, possibly, in print? (5-5)
- 8 Two in a bar working at bank-holiday rates (6-4)
- 11 Tendency to follow many bison with bunch (4-8)
- 13 Father's retreat in the old days (6-4)
- 14 Bedlam rule over having a dome-shaped structure? (10)
- 16 Plunder from old Chester, say? (9)
- 21 Munn does not have a grand spare (5)
- 22 Celebrity in street, a red-head (4)
- 23 Uppish type no longer a shoemaker (4)

France go-ahead for ticketless fans

THE Football Supporters' Association yesterday rejected the Government's advice for supporters not to travel to the World Cup finals in France without a ticket. The Government had warned fans not to travel if they did not have a valid ticket from either the Football Association or through the telephone hotline.

However, the FSA said it was unrealistic to expect supporters not to travel and said it would

be giving advice on the pitfalls of buying black market tickets. They denied that this approach was likely to cause problems and told the Government it should have consulted them before launching its "no ticket, don't travel" campaign.

The FSA will be operating its mobile "Fans Embassy" mini-bus to follow England supporters around France giving advice and assistance and liaising with

the local authorities. Kevin Miles of the FSA, who will staff the mini-bus, said: "I think there is a tiny minority of so-called fans who use football as a focus for organising violence. I think the police have that situation under control. I don't think our role is to act as a ticket agency but we will give people advice about what the dangers are."

Fans' hotline: 0207 608721. FSA Mobile Embassy: 0252 121514.

Pascoe picks up the baton for bankrupt British athletics

By Mike Rowbottom

BRITISH athletics, brought to its knees by bankruptcy last October, has picked itself up, dusted itself down and entrusted its commercial future to the expertise of Alan Pascoe.

Yesterday the former European and Commonwealth 400 metres hurdles champion explained how he had sold (for £5m) his 40 per cent stake in APT, the sports marketing company he founded in 1984, in order to concentrate on running Britain's five annual televised meetings.

Pascoe, who will be assisted by the former British Athletic Federation promotions officer, Ian Stewart, will stage events and arrange sponsorships through a new company, Fast Track. Although he will receive the commission for bringing sponsors into the sport, the meetings themselves will be organised on a non-profit basis. Any profits will be ploughed back into the sport.

Dave Moorcroft, chief executive of the interim body UK Athletics '98, said that the commercial rights to the sport had

been secured permanently by paying the administrators currently overseeing the sport a sum of £400,000. This money, which came out of a British team sponsorship by Reebok, has secured ultimate control over the commercial operation for the main administrative body in British athletics. With this safeguard in place, they have contracted out the operation to someone who has worked in that area with success for more than a decade.

It was also confirmed yesterday that an agreement has been reached with the AAA of England that the AAA Championships will be a combined UK trials for at least the next four years. UK Athletics '98 and Fast Track will work in partnership with Channel 4 who will remain the television partner for the next three years at least.

While Pascoe faces the commercial challenge, Moorcroft is half-way through a wide-ranging exercise at club level to decide the sport's best future structure. "We're determined 1998 will mark the relaunch of Britain's main Olympic sport," Moorcroft said.

Pascoe sees his task as creating what he describes as a "re-branding" of the sport. "Sometimes I think we are so close to athletics that we forget how strong it is in relation to other sports in this country." But while Pascoe and Moorcroft look to the future, the creditors of a sport which revealed debts of £2m last year are still waiting for any money to be released. The Federation's headquarters in Birmingham is on the brink of being sold for around £250,000, but the one remaining problem for the administrators is legal action being taken by Diane Modahl, who is attempting to sue the Federation for a reported £750,000 after a successful appeal against a doping ban.

Overall, however, there is a feeling of optimism in British athletic circles. With the Amateur Athletic Association, who many have regarded as a reactionary body, now maintaining that they are on board the Moorcroft road show, the sport appears to be pulling together for the first time in years.

Pascoe's plan, page 28

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